English Readings

SHAKESPEARE'S

MERCHANT OF VENICE

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THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, APPENDICES, AND GLOSSARY

BY

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PREFACE.

This edition aims first of all by means of the Introduction to inform the student of the circumstances under which the *Merchant of Venice* was written and to show him something of Shakespeare's mastery of his art. Further, it presents, with a few necessary omissions, a new and, I trust, an accurate text. The text of the Cambridge edition has been used to print from, but this has been throughout checked and corrected by a reference to the original sources. For these I have relied upon Griggs's photographic reproductions of the First and Second Quartos and upon Staunton's reprint of the First Folio, with an occasional reference to the copies of the First, Second, and Fourth Folios at present deposited in the Library of Princeton University. As a rule the readings of the Second Quarto have been followed. In the few cases where I have deviated from the old copies it has been with the conviction that I was thereby restoring the true reading.

The Critical and Explanatory Notes are intended for the young student who is just making acquaintance with the work of Shakespeare. They are, in consequence, detailed and copious. I have, I trust, realized the futility of sending a child in one of our secondary schools

to works of reference which he perhaps cannot and certainly will not consult. In the preparation of these notes I have drawn upon many sources. Chief among these has been that magnificent monument of American scholarship, Dr. Furness's *Variorum Edition*.

The Textual Notes are intended primarily to justify the text presented in the body of the book. They may also, it is hoped, serve to introduce students of a somewhat more advanced stage to the fascinating subject of Shakespearian text-criticism. In the various appendices matters are touched upon that are of interest to all students of the play, but a consideration of which may be profitably postponed to the study of the play itself, for after all "the play's the thing."

The Glossary is for the most part based upon Schmidt's *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, supplemented, so far as is possible, by reference to the *New English Dictionary*.

In conclusion I wish to express my sincere thanks to Mr. D. L. Chambers for his valued assistance in the preparation and in the proof-reading of the text, and to my colleague, Mr. A. W. Long, whose long experience and ripened judgment render him at once a severe and a sympathetic critic of such a work as this.

T. M. P.

Princeton University,
May 12, 1903.

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INTRODUCTON.

The *Merchant of Venice* is Shakespeare's first undisputed and original masterpiece. It is, in Dr. Furnivall's phrase, "the first full Shakespeare." Its plot, a combination of romantic incidents found in various old poems and stories, is admirably developed, its character-drawing is clear and effective, and its style, both in prose and verse, is a marvel of beauty, simplicity, and sustained balance between thought and expression such as we look for in vain either in the first or in the last period of Shakespeare's work. It retains to-day all its old effectiveness upon the stage, and even in this country, where Shakespeare's works are so rarely represented, the *Merchant of Venice* lives in the memories of thousands through the many brilliant performances of Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry. It is, therefore, a play peculiarly fitted for the student who is just beginning to make acquaintance with the works of Shakespeare; and it is for such a student that this edition is primarily intended.

I. Shakespeare's Early Work.

In order to understand the true significance of the *Merchant of Venice* in the development of Shakespeare's art it is well to look back and see what he had done before he turned to the composition of this play, and what the circumstances were under which it was produced. Shakespeare came up to London to seek his fortune in the year

1586 or 1587, a poor young fellow of twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, but already the father of three children. A tradition, which there is some ground for accepting, tells us that his first occupation in London consisted in holding the horses of the gentlemen who visited "The Theatre," a play-house in the fields outside of London. It was not long, however, before he succeeded in taking a step which definitely determined his future. In 1587 or 1588 he joined Lord Leicester's company of players, probably at first as a 'servitor', that is, as the apprentice and understudy of one of the regular actors. In a short time his charming manners and his talent[1] as an actor won for him a better place in the company. When the theatres were closed on account of the plague in 1592 and Lord Leicester's men went on tour, Shakespeare remained in London and devoted himself to the composition and publication of his poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, which were entered on the Stationers' Registers in April 1593 and May 1594 respectively. These poems were received with extraordinary favor by the reading public of that day, and Shakespeare's name, which up to that time was probably known only to regular patrons of the theatre, at once became famous as that of the most delightful of living poets. It may have been, in part at least, on this account that his old company, on returning to London, offered him a regular position in their number. At any rate we find him in the Christmas holidays of 1594 playing with the leading members of the company—Burbage, the famous tragedian, and Kemp, the greatest comic actor of the day—before Queen Elizabeth.

Shakespeare had already turned his attention to composing as well as to acting plays. It is probable that his

[1] "Myself have seen his demeanor no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes." Henry Chettle; *Kind Heart's Dream*, 1592.

first efforts were directed toward the revision of other men's work. *Titus Andronicus*, for example, is said to represent the work of a 'private author' which received only some master-touches from Shakespeare's hand. This is, to be sure, a disputed point, for some of the most recent critics of this play assign it wholly to Shakespeare. In the first part of *King Henry VI*, however, we can assert almost positively that Shakespeare's share was confined to the insertion in an old play of some of the more brilliant and poetic scenes.[1] In the second and third parts of the same play Shakespeare seems to have worked hand in hand with Marlowe in the revision of two older dramas. In *Richard III* he struck out for himself and, while still working in the style and under the influence of Marlowe, produced a play superior in construction, characterization, and brilliant rhetoric to any work of the older dramatist from whom he had learned so much. Yet his first really independent tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, however successful it may have been upon the stage, can hardly have satisfied his own exacting criticism. Even in the form in which it has come down to us, revised, corrected, and no doubt immensely improved, in later years, it is the most imperfect and uneven of his tragedies. And it may well be that Shakespeare's recognition of this fact led him for a long period of years to renounce this species of dramatic composition and to devote himself to histories and comedies until his powers had attained their full development.

In comedy Shakespeare seems from the first to have been more independent and original. It is true that *Love's Labour's Lost* owes much to the influence of Lyly, and that the *Comedy of Errors* is in large part an adaptation from Plautus. But in both of these plays there is abundant evidence of Shakespeare's brilliant gift for

[1] I. iv; IV. v, vi, vii; and V. iii in part.

lively dialogue, amusing action, and graceful poetry; and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, though marred by a hasty and imperfect conclusion, strikes a note which rings throughout Shakespeare's work, that of romantic comedy. The fairy comedy of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* probably marks the close of this period of Shakespeare's work, in which, on the whole, his genius as a poet outran his power as a dramatist.

It must not be forgotten that in these early years of his life in London Shakespeare was but one of a crowd of playwrights who were creating new forms of beauty, mirth, or terror for the English stage. If there were one of these who rose supreme above his fellows, it was not Shakespeare, but that pioneer of the poetic drama and revolutionizer of the Elizabethan stage, Christopher Marlowe. Marlowe's first drama, *Tamburlaine*, had taken the town by storm; even the rival playwrights, who envied his success and invented new terms of derision for the daring extravagances of his diction and the sonorous rhythm of his mighty line, were forced despite themselves to follow in his footsteps and to ape as best they could his superb creations. Shakespeare, we may well believe, was none of these, but a gentle and a grateful disciple. In later years, indeed, when he had outgrown Marlowe's influence, he was inclined to laugh a little at the portentous bombast that marred much of his master's work. But over against the laugh which Ancient Pistol aroused when he parodied the famous passage about the pampered jades of Asia, we may set the sigh that rose from the hearts of the old lovers of Marlowe at Shakespeare's tender allusion to the dead poet in *As You Like It*. With the single exception of *Romeo and Juliet* all Shakespeare's early work in serious dramatic composition, whether tragedy or chronicle play, shows traces more or

less pronounced of the powerful and long-continued influence of Marlowe.

In June, 1593, however, Marlowe perished in a tavern brawl. We may well imagine the effect of his death upon Shakespeare, and the young poet's silent resolve to rise to the place that Marlowe had left vacant. It was natural, therefore, when the theatres re-opened in January, 1594, and Shakespeare was invited to join the Lord Chamberlain's men as a playwright and actor, that he should look about him for the subject of a new drama in which he might prove his claim to the vacant throne. Such a subject was soon suggested to him by a series of startling events which roused London to an outburst of fury that found its echo upon the stage of the public theatres.

II. The Conspiracy of Dr. Lopez.

It has been generally believed upon the authority of learned historians that the royal decree of Edward I, which banished all Jews from England in 1290, was strictly carried into effect, and that until its repeal, during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, no Jew was permitted to set foot upon English soil. But recent researches have shown that this was by no means the case. A vast number of Jews were, no doubt, expelled from England under Edward I; but it is quite unlikely that the entire race was weeded out. In Gascony, at least, where a decree of banishment was passed about the same time, Jews are found living undisturbed some thirty years later. In the fifteenth century a Spanish ambassador complained to Henry VII of the presence in London of refugee Jews from Spain in sufficient numbers to warrant their erection of a synagogue. Henry VIII consulted a learned rabbi on the lawfulness of his proposed divorce from Katherine

of Aragon. Elizabeth enrolled a Portuguese Jewess among her waiting-women. Stowe, the old chronicler, notes that Hounsditch was inhabited by baptised Jews, who, for the most part, plied the business of pawnbroking. And early in the next century a disgusted pamphleteer declares "a great store of Jews have we in England; a few in the Court, many in the city, more in the country." Unquestionably the most distinguished of all his race in England during Elizabeth's reign was the famous Dr. Lopez, her personal physician, and would-be poisoner.

Roderigo Lopez was a Portuguese Jew who had settled in England in the first year of Elizabeth's reign. He joined the English Church, and rose steadily in prominence as a physician of more than ordinary skill. In 1575 his name appeared almost at the head of a list of London doctors. He attended some of the leading statesmen of England, among others, Lord Leicester in whose service he no doubt became acquainted with Richard Burbage, afterwards the first impersonator of Shylock. In 1584 the anonymous Catholic who wrote the savage onslaught on Protestant England known as *Leicester's Commonwealth* charged Lopez with being a poisoner in the pay of Leicester. Two years later he was appointed physician in chief to Queen Elizabeth, and Francis Bacon, who must often have met him at court, speaks of him as a man "very observant and officious, and of a pleasing and pliable behavior." In 1588 he was appointed interpreter and adviser to Don Antonio, a pretender to the Portuguese throne who had come to London to secure English aid in driving Philip of Spain from Portugal. The Earl of Essex, Elizabeth's latest favorite, the brilliant and energetic leader of the war-party in England, eagerly espoused the cause of Don Antonio and induced Lopez to enter into correspondence with certain friends in Spain to secure such

news of the affairs of that country as might contribute to the success of the project. This entrance of Lopez upon the field of statecraft, crossed as it was in those days by plots and counter-plots, undermined by spies and informers, and threatened with dangers of all sorts from loss of royal favor to sudden death, was before long to prove fatal to him. He quarreled with Essex and revealed, we are told, certain professional secrets which touched the Earl's honor. Essex swore revenge upon the doctor and he was not long in finding an opportunity to fulfil his vow.

Among the retainers of Don Antonio were a trio of Portuguese gentlemen, who were secretly in communication with the Court of Spain. These wretches hit upon the brilliant idea of bribing Lopez to poison their master, and the Jew seems to have been not altogether unwilling, for he is said to have declared that Don Antonio should die of the first sickness that attacked him. Then the minds of the conspirators turned to higher game. If only Lopez could be induced to poison the Queen herself, Philip of Spain would pay a generous reward, and a liberal commission would come into the hands of the go-betweens. By way of a beginning, one of them brought Lopez from Philip a beautiful ring of the value of one hundred guineas. Lopez thanked the giver and sent word that he was ready to serve him in any way. Then he actually presented the ring, as a token of his fidelity, to Elizabeth herself who returned it with gracious words.

A little later more definite terms began to be discussed among the conspirators. Lopez, they told Philip, would poison Elizabeth for 50,000 crowns—about $500,000—but he demanded the money in advance. Philip was far too wary to pay so great a sum before the deed was done, but he was willing to turn it over to Lopez in Antwerp where

he might come and settle with his friends after Elizabeth's death. The negotiations were difficult and protracted, and in the midst of them one of the go-betweens was arrested in England. Lopez incautiously wrote to him; the letter was opened by the police; and in the month of January, 1594 the good town of London was startled by the news that the Queen's famous doctor had been arrested on a charge of high treason. At first, indeed, it seemed as if Lopez would be able to clear himself. There was little evidence against him. The Queen herself believed him innocent and called Essex a "rash and temerarious" youth for bringing such a charge against her trusted servant. Lord Burghley, her chief minister, and his son, who were appointed along with Essex to examine into the matter, were equally sceptical as to the physician's guilt. But when two of the conspirators who were in the hands of the police denounced Lopez in the hope of saving their own necks, the Jew gave way and admitted that he had been in correspondence with Philip and had offered to poison the Queen; but he insisted that he had never really meant to do so and had only been planning to cheat the Spanish King of a large sum of money. He was brought up for trial on the last day of February and, after a violent altercation with one of the other conspirators in which Lopez with "blasphemous and horrible execrations" denied that he knew anything at all of such a plot, he broke down completely, admitted his guilt, and signed his own confession; whereupon he was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor.

For some months he remained a prisoner in the Tower. Elizabeth, it would seem, disliked to sign the death warrant of an old and trusted servant. The London populace was naturally much excited, and all sorts of stories were current

in the streets as to the confessions of the prisoners and as to the torture which had been used to extract them. It was commonly reported that Lopez and his fellow criminals had been repeatedly put upon the rack to extort the truth. This, however, seems to be a mistake, as a private letter from Robert Cecil to a friend, written immediately after the trial, declares that Lopez lied when he asserted that his first confession was made to avoid the rack. In prison Lopez retracted his confession and petitioned the Queen for mercy. At one time she seemed inclined to grant it, but she finally yielded to the persuasions of her ministers, all of whom were by this time thoroughly convinced of the Jew's guilt. Early in June the death warrant was signed, and Lopez and his two fellow-conspirators were dragged through the streets of London to Tyburn Hill. The wretched doctor attempted on the scaffold to address the crowd, protesting his innocence and declaring that he loved Elizabeth better than he did Christ Jesus. This assertion, coming from a Jew, although one ostensibly professing the Christian religion, was greeted with howls of derision, and Lopez was pushed from the ladder amid the shouts and jeers of an angry mob. He was cut down alive, disembowelled and quartered, and his bloody limbs were exposed as a warning to traitors upon the gates of the city. His goods were confiscated, but a great part of them was returned to his widow by the Queen, who kept for herself, however, the famous ring which had been the first installment of the reward to be paid for her murder.

It is easy to imagine to what a pitch of fury the discovery of Lopez's plot and the exciting scene of his execution must have fanned the dormant, but ever-present, passion of Anti-Semitism in the hearts of Shakespeare's contemporaries. We must not forget that in those days the Jews were a despised and hated race, not only on

account of their religion, but also because of their practice of lending money at interest or usury—the two terms were at that time synonymous. They were generally believed to be guilty of all sorts of hideous crimes, particularly of poisoning, and of the murder of Christian children. The guilt of Lopez seemed to show that even a converted Jew was only too likely to play the traitor to his benefactress. The popular drama of the day, in this as in so much else the mirror of popular feeling, reflects the temper of the nation. Dr. Lopez is alluded to in the additions made shortly after this time to Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, in Dekker's *Whore of Babylon*, and even so late as in Middleton's *Game of Chess*, performed in 1625. The most conspicuous effect of the trial and execution of Lopez, however, is seen in the immediate and successful revival of Marlowe's famous play, the *Jew of Malta*.

III. The Jew of Malta.

This play, the most startling and melodramatic of all Marlowe's works, was, perhaps, the most popular piece of that age. Edward Alleyne, one of the two most famous tragedians of the day, had created the title role, which was reckoned as one of his most successful parts. According to Mr. Lee, no play of the time equalled the number of performances recorded for the *Jew of Malta*. For over a year before the arrest of Lopez it had been withdrawn from the stage, having apparently ceased to attract an audience. Within a week of the Jew's imprisonment, however, Henslowe, the enterprising manager of the Rose Theatre, drew it from the shelf, induced Alleyne to take up the principal part again, and produced the play once more to crowded houses. It was performed fifteen times before the close of the year—an almost unprecedented run for an Elizabethan play—and four times in the month

of June which witnessed the execution of Dr. Lopez. There can be no doubt, I think, that this revival was due to the prevailing spirit of Anti-Semitism, and, in turn, that the excited play-goer of the day saw in the monstrous figure of the Jew of Malta a prophetic anticipation, and a true picture of the English Jew who had just paid the penalty of his crimes with his life.

The *Jew of Malta* is so constantly referred to by Shakesperian critics and so unmistakably influenced Shakespeare in the composition of the *Merchant of Venice* that it seems worth while to present here a brief sketch of its story. Barrabas, the villain of the play, is represented as an enormously rich and avaricious merchant in the island of Malta. He scorns the Christians for their poverty, and boasts that he is wealthier than any Christian alive. The Knights of St. John, the rulers of the island, are suddenly called upon to pay arrears of tribute to the Turk, and, in order to secure the money, they summon the Jews of Malta and impose upon them a tax of half their property. The only means of escape from this imposition is by a profession of Christianity, and the Jew who will neither pay nor become a convert is threatened with confiscation of all he possesses. As Barrabas refuses either to pay or to change his religion, all his goods are seized and his house is turned into a convent. In order to regain a large hoard of money and precious stones which he has concealed in his house, Barrabas induces his only child, Abigail, to enter the nunnery as a novice. She does so, and at midnight throws down to her father the bags containing the treasures, over which he bursts into an exultant chant of joy. Shortly after she returns to her father, and Barrabas at once begins to plot revenge upon the Christians.

Abigail has a Christian lover, Don Mathias, whose love

she returns. By means of forged letters Barrabas entangles him in a quarrel with Ludovick the Governor's son, who is also in love with Abigail, and the two kill each other in a duel. Abigail, in despair, enters the nunnery a second time, whereupon Barrabas poisons her and all the nuns with a pot of rice, which he sends to the convent as a gift. With her last breath Abigail reveals to a friar the device by which Barrabas had brought about the deaths of Matthias and Ludovick. In order to extort money from Barrabas this friar goes with a companion to the Jew's house and informs him that he knows of the guilty secret. By a clever trick, however, Barrabas manages to kill one of the friars and get the other hanged as the murderer.

So far all has gone well with the Jew, but now a Turkish slave, who has been the accomplice of his crimes, deserts him for the sake of a beautiful courtesan and begins to extort money from him by threats. Barrabas disguises himself as a lute-player and appearing at a banquet in the courtesan's house kills her, her bully, and the slave by a means of a poisoned bouquet. Before they die they tell the Governor how his son met his death and Barrabas is seized and threatened with torture. He escapes by taking a drug which throws him into a trance-like sleep, in which state his supposed corpse is thrown outside the city walls. Here he meets the Turkish enemies of Malta to whom he betrays the town. The Turks make him Governor and he now has his enemies in his power. For some wholly inexplicable reason, however, he turns against the Turks and arranges with the Christians to seize the Turkish leader, and to blow up all his soldiers in a monastery. The Christians pretend to enter into the scheme, but secretly plot against Barrabas, and at the last moment throw him into a boiling caldron where he perishes shrieking

out curses upon his eneimes. In the meantime the Turkish soldiers have been blown up, their general is seized and the Christians regain the town.

Even from so slight a sketch as this it is possible to get some idea of Marlowe's play. It was a tragedy of blood of the kind so popular when Shakespeare was just beginning his work as a dramatist. The central figure is hardly so much a man as a monster. It is not merely that he is a villain; he is an unreasonable and incomprehensible villain. But what can be expected of a character who favors the andience with the following autobiographical details:

> As for myself I walk abroad o' nights
> And kill sick people groaning under walls,
> Sometimes I go about and poison wells.
> . . . . . .
> Being young I studied physic and began
> To practice first upon the Italian;
> There I enriched the priests with burials.
> . . . . . .
> And after that I was an engineer
> And in the wars 'twixt France and Germany
> Under pretence of helping Charles the Fifth,
> Slew friend and enemy with my strategems.
> . . . . . .
> Then after that I was a usurer,
> And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,
> And tricks belonging unto brokery,
> I filled the jails with bankrupts in a year,
> And with young orphans planted hospitals;
> And every morn made some or other mad,
> And now and then one hang himself for grief.

In spite of some magnificent outbursts of poetry, the whole tone of the play, and in particular the treatment of its central character, must have been utterly abhorrent to such a mind as Shakespeare's.

And here we may, I think, get a clue as to the true origin of the *Merchant of Venice*. Mr. Lee is, no doubt, too hasty in speaking of Dr. Lopez as the original of Shylock. The points of direct connection between the two are, as he himself acknowledges, very slight. And it would be absurd to say that the *Merchant of Venice* is in any sense an imitation of the *Jew of Malta*. But what could be more likely than that Shakespeare, the practical playwright, forced by the necessity of his profession to select a theme which would attract popular interest, should, in the spring or summer of 1594, while all the town was ringing with the treason of Lopez and revelling in the horrors of the *Jew of Malta*, have himself resolved to write a play in which a Jew should be the central figure. This figure had, of course, to be a villain. It would have been impossible in that age and at such a time to have presented a noble and long-suffering Jew as the hero of a popular play. But when Shakespeare began to work upon this figure, whom in exact accordance with popular tradition he conceived as a usurer and a miser, cruel and revengeful, his own deep insight into the soul of man forced him to explain and interpret the character, to show how heredity and environment had contributed to make him what he was, to assign strong and weighty motives for his passion of revenge, in short to portray not a monster, but a man.

It is hardly too much to say that the *Merchant of Venice*, and the character of Shylock in particular, represents a reaction in Shakespeare's artistic conscience against the tradition of Marlowe and his school.

IV. The Sources.

It is one of the commonplaces of criticism that Shakespeare seldom troubled himself to invent a plot or story.

His interest as a dramatist lay first of all in his characters; in their development and mutual interaction. It seems to have been his practice when preparing to produce a new drama to turn over the old manuscripts of plays belonging to his company, to take up some story translated from the French or Italian novelists, or to fasten upon the reign of some king as related by the standard chroniclers. From one of these sources he selected such a tale as would permit the development of the characters he had in mind at the time; and in his dramatization of the material he often kept the story almost intact, omitting only such incidents as were unsuitable to stage representation and adding such as rendered the story more effective upon the stage. On the other hand the characters of the story were, as a rule, so transformed under his hand in the process of dramatization that in many cases they retained in the finished play little but the name and the dramatic environment that was originally theirs. Thus Shakespeare's Hamlet, Macbeth, and Lear, bear little or no resemblance to their originals in the novel, the history, and the old play on which the tragedies that bear their names are based.

It is generally supposed that an old play called *The Jew* served Shakespeare as the source from which he drew the story of the *Merchant of Venice*. Unfortunately the play in question is lost, and all we know of it is found in a very brief contemporary description. Stephen Gosson, an Oxford man, who had himself written several plays, published in 1579 a fierce attack upon the theatre entitled *The School of Abuse*, in which he denounced the drama of the time as responsible for all sorts of evils. Some few plays, however, he excepted from this general condemnation; and among these was *The Jew*, "representing the greediness of worldly chusers and the bloody

minds of usurers." This is not a very detailed description, but at least we learn from it that the chief character of the lost play, the character from whom it took its name, was a Jew and a bloody-minded usurer. So much the last phrase tells us. It is generally assumed that the preceding words, "the greediness of worldly chusers," refer to some incident in the play similar to the choice of the caskets in the *Merchant of Venice* and therefore that in this lost play there were already combined the two main stories of Shakespeare's drama. This assumption seems to me rather doubtful, as I shall attempt a little further on to show.

Although the play mentioned by Gosson has disappeared, there exists another source of the *Merchant of Venice* which deserves careful consideration. This is an Italian tale included in a collection of stories called *Il Pecorone* compiled about 1378 by Giovanni Fiorentino. An abstract of this story is given on pp. 205–208, and it needs only a glance to discover in it the original source of the main plot of our play. Here we have the incident of the borrowing of a sum of money by a wealthy merchant of Venice to equip a young friend for the courtship of a rich and beautiful lady. The lender is a Jew; the pledge exacted is a pound of flesh. The lover wins his lady; but the merchant fails to pay the sum he had borrowed, and is arrested by the Jew, who claims the forfeiture. The lover returns to Venice and vainly tries to release his friend by paying many times the value of the loan. The lady comes to Venice in the disguise of a lawyer, and undertakes to settle the case. She pronounces the bond legal, but urges the Jew to be merciful. He refuses and she orders him to take his penalty. As he is about to cut the pound of flesh, she bids him, on pain of death, beware of cutting more or less than a pound and of shedding a drop of blood. The Jew then

offers to release the merchant for the large sum offered by the friend, but the lady insists that he must either take the forfeiture or cancel his bond. The Jew in a rage tears the bond and the merchant is saved. The friend offers the money to the disguised lady, who refuses it, but begs a ring upon his finger which she herself had given him, and after some hesitation he gives it to her. She hurries away from Venice and reaches her home before him. When he arrives there with his friend, the merchant, she asks for the ring, and feigns great anger against him saying that he had given it to a lady in Venice. After reducing him to the verge of tears, she shows him the ring and explains how she had disguised herself and baffled the Jew.

The long series of coincidences admits of only one of two conclusions; either Shakespeare had read the story, or the lost play of *The Jew* was itself a dramatization thereof, and Shakespeare simply rewrote the play, preserving all the main incidents. Of these two, the latter is the more probable.[1]

Assuming then that *The Jew* was a dramatization of the story in *Il Pecorone*, is it probable that this play contained the second story of the *Merchant of Venice*, the winning of an heiress by means of a choice between three caskets? Most commentators take this for granted on account of Gosson's statement that *The Jew* represented

[1] We have no evidence to show that Shakespeare at this time was able to read Italian, though later on he seems to have acquired some knowledge of that anguage. The story may, of course, have been translated into English as so many Italian stories were in Shakespeare's day, but we have no record of any English version earlier than 1755. The simplest solution of the problem seems to be that *The Jew* was itself a dramatic version of the Italian story. Such dramatizations were frequent all through the period of the Elizabethan drama. Gosson himself had produced a play, *Captain Mario*, which he calls "a cast of Italian devices." As early as 1566 Gascoigne had translated Ariosto's pleasant comedy *I Suppositi* and the source of Shakespeare's great tragic masterpiece, *Othello*, is to be found in an Italian story.

the "greediness of worldly chusers." But if the supposed casket scenes of the lost play were at all like those of Shakespeare's, the phrase would be singularly inappropriate. Neither Morocco nor Arragon can properly be called worldly choosers. Their choice of the gold and silver caskets respectively was not inspired by greed; in rank and wealth they were both equal, if not superior, to Portia, and there is not the slightest hint in Shakespeare's play that they sought the fortune rather than the person of the beautiful heiress. Morocco fails because of his superficiality, Arragon because of his self-conceit; neither because of a desire for worldly goods.

Again if the lost play was a dramatization of the Italian story, it is probable that the unknown author would have held rather closely to his original. Dramatic art in England before 1579 was hardly advanced enough to devise such an ingenious combination of plots as appears in the *Merchant of Venice*. The device of the caskets is an immense improvement from every point of view, æsthetic, dramatic, and moral, over the method by which the lady of Belmont is won in the Italian story; and we have but to turn over the surviving plays of the seventies to be convinced that so early a dramatist as the author of *The Jew* was almost certainly incapable of making this advance.

The original of the Casket Story is found in *Gesta Romanorum*, a collection of anecdotes, legends and moral tales compiled toward the end of the Middle Ages. An outline of the story as Shakespeare knew it is given on pp. 208–209. The main point of the story—the winning of a husband by a choice between three caskets of gold, silver, and lead, whose outer appearance belies their contents—must have struck Shakespeare's fancy. The mottoes on the caskets, too, attracted his attention. Two of them

he kept, making only a slight alteration in the second; the third he dropped altogether as giving somewhat too obvious a hint, and substituted for it an inscription of his own invention.

Both of these stories were creations of the romantic imagination of the Middle Ages. The Bond Story probably had its origin in some legend connected with the old Roman law which permitted the creditors of an insolvent debtor to sell him as a slave and to divide the proceeds. The terms of this law were such that they have been often understood as allowing the creditors to cut the unfortunate debtor to pieces. Whether this was the case or not, however, it is certain that no such penalty was ever enforced in the Italy of the fourteenth, or the England of the sixteenth, century. The readers of *Il Pecorone* therefore, or the spectators of *The Jew*, knew well enough that the incident of the bond was not a transcript from life, but a romantic tale without a basis of reality, and this is not the only improbable, or impossible, incident of the tale. The intervention of the disguised lady in the trial scene, the quibble by which she rescues the merchant, and the episode of the ring, are simply incredible if we apply to them the tests by which we judge a narrative of events purporting actually to have happened. And the story of the caskets, with its princess who is shipwrecked, swallowed by a whale and carried by the obliging monster to the very land whither she was going, is a fairy story pure and simple. The story of *Il Pecorone*, offered to Shakespeare, then, a series of entertaining and picturesque incidents, capable, as has already been shown, of dramatic treatment. In particular, it gave him what we may imagine him to have been looking for at that time, the figure of a Jewish usurer who plots against the life of a Christian. The story of the caskets offered him a substi-

tute for the weakest incident, from a dramatic point of view, in the Italian tale, and three effective scenes. The tone of both stories was decidedly that of comedy rather than of tragedy. The malice of the Jew plays but a small part in the original story, and his character is not even indicated. The author has not even troubled himself to assign any reason for his determination to exact the penalty of the pound of flesh, other than that he wished to have the satisfaction of saying that he had put to death the greatest of the Christian merchants. But this very absence of characteristic traits left all the more scope for the display of Shakespeare's peculiar gift, his power of creating a personality appropriate to the given environment of a story.

V. Shakespeare's Treatment of the Sources.

In his dramatization of his sources Shakespeare set himself to work, first of all, to render the story credible. The first incredible incident of the tale is that a merchant, who must have had some knowledge of the ways of Jewish usurers, should have been careless enough to sign the fatal bond. Had he no Christian friends from whom he could borrow, or was there no Jew in Venice ready to lend him the sum at the legal rate of interest? Shakespeare solves this difficulty in a simple, yet quite satisfactory manner. It is not Antonio, but Bassanio who approaches Shylock for the loan; and it does not seem unnatural that a young gentleman of Bassanio's class should go to a professional money-lender rather than to a merchant for the loan of so comparatively small a sum. After Bassanio has opened the business with Shylock, it is impossible for Antonio to withdraw from it without seeming at once discourteous to his friend and afraid of the Jew. Furthermore the actual signing of the bond is brought about in

the most plausible manner. Shylock and Antonio enter into a hot discussion over the lawfulness of taking interest, the practice which had so often aroused Antonio's anger against the Jew. In the heat of the discussion Antonio's anger breaks out again, and he threatens to renew his former outrageous treatment of Shylock, whereupon the latter with a sudden change of tone implores his friendship, offers to renounce his own conception of what is right, and to lend the money without interest. The offer is so fair that it is quite impossible for Antonio to reject it, and, as to the forfeit of a pound of flesh, suggested by Shylock apparently as a sort of afterthought, that is a mere nominal penalty, "a merry jest." Antonio could have no reason for suspecting in this offer a plot for his destruction. Even at the eleventh hour it seemed incredible to the Duke and to the whole world of Venice that Shylock could actually intend to exact the forfeiture. And even if Antonio had suspected some such design, he would have felt amply protected against it, since long before the bond fell due he would be in possession of money enough to pay it nine times over. To refuse the offer of Shylock, therefore, would be to show himself timorous, and suspicious, qualities utterly alien to his manly and somewhat too generous disposition. In this way Shakespeare has veiled the naked improbability of the original incident with a series of explanations and motives which render it, if not absolutely convincing to the realistic critic, at least plausible to the impartial observer.

The second great improbability in the story is that the bond should have fallen due without Antonio's making an effort to pay it. We may pass over the fact that all his ventures failed, that his argosies from Tripoli, from Mexico, and England, should all be wrecked simultaneously. In Shakespeare's day ships were exposed to perils which we

can no longer realize, and shipwrecks were far more common. If a man sailed from London to Constantinople, it was thought safe to bet five to one that he would never return alive. There can hardly have been an English merchant in Shakespeare's audience who did not realize that what happened to Antonio in the play, might at any moment happen to him in stern reality. But why, one asks in amazement, did not Antonio borrow money from some of his many friends to pay the bond when it fell due and so escape Shylock's vengeance? The answer to this question is found in his character. Of a melancholy and somewhat lethargic temperament, his ideal of the ancient Roman honor was one of resignation and passive endurance. On the news of his losses, rather than humiliate himself by attempting to negotiate a fresh loan for which he could now offer no security, he quietly withdrew to his house and awaited his arrest. Even in the days of his wealth, when he was surrounded by friends, he had held the world but as a stage where he had a sad part to play. Now he is quite ready to make his exit. He makes no effort to escape his fate and his one wish in life is to see Bassanio once more. It is true that we find him in the third scene of the third act attempting to propitiate Shylock. But this attempt is hardly in keeping with his character, and his effort is so faint-hearted that one is almost disposed to believe that he sought the interview, not of his own accord, but at the urgent desire of his friends that he leave nothing untried to touch the heart of Shylock.

To us in the twentieth century, perhaps the most improbable part of the whole story is that a Jew should without cause, for cause in the old tale there is none, so obstinately prefer blood to money. To the men of the Middle Ages, to be sure, who were always ready to believe

evil of a Jew, the cruelty seemed only what might have been expected from one of his race. But Shakespeare knew better. Whether or not he had any acquaintance with Jews we can not say. He may just possibly have known Lopez himself. At any rate, as he proposed to draw the true picture of a man and not a monstrous caricature of a race-type, he set himself to work to explain the Jew's hatred of Antonio. To explain, not to justify it, for however much modern critics and actors have sought to glorify Shylock as the heroic representative of a martyr-race, we may be sure that no such idea entered Shakespeare's mind. But he knew that a Jew was a man of like passions with ourselves, and to render such a deadly hatred credible, strong motives were needed. Now it would be hard to find in all the catalogue of passions three which would more irresistibly impel a man, Jew or Gentile, to a deed of blood, than religious hatred, avarice and revenge; and all these three lie at the bottom of Shylock's hatred of Antonio. No sooner does the Jew see the merchant come upon the stage, than he whispers to himself

"I hate him, for he is a Christian."

Antonio has repeatedly insulted Shylock's sacred nation, and the Jew repays him with a double portion of hate. Added to this is the motive of avarice. Antonio's practice of lending money without interest naturally tended to bring down the rates of usury in Venice, and on more than one occasion he had intervened to rescue distressed debtors from the clutches of the Jew. "Were he out of Venice," says Shylock to his confidant, Tubal, "I can make what merchandise I will." It is not merely religious hatred, therefore, but also a calculating avarice which urges Shylock to strike down his great opponent. Finally, to these motives Shakespeare added that of revenge for personal

wrongs and indignities. In the Italian story the Jew seems never to have met the merchant before entering into the bond with him. Shylock, on the other hand, has an old grudge and a heavy score against Antonio. The merchant has, to quote the Jew's own words, "disgraced me and hindered me of half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, cooled my friends, heated my enemies." He has even ventured on the grossest personal insult, he has spat upon the Jew's beard and kicked him like a dog. Here is reason enough for revenge even before the action of the play begins. But, in order that we may see this passion of revenge growing and dilating to gigantic proportions before our very eyes, Shakespeare has added to the story as he found it the episode of Shylock's daughter, her love for a Christian, her elopement, and her robbery of her father. It is not unlikely that this episode was suggested to him by the character of Abigail in Marlowe's play. Here, too, the Jew's daughter has a Christian lover and leaves her father to become a Christian. But with this the resemblance ceases. Marlowe's Jew promptly poisons his daughter and all the nuns of her convent. Her flight and his vengeance is a mere incident in his career of crime. But Jessica's flight with her father's gold and jewels plays an important, perhaps the decisive part, in fixing Shylock's resolve to have the heart of his enemy. Before this he might perhaps have allowed his avarice to triumph over his revenge. But after the Christians have stolen his daughter, after that daughter has stolen his money and the very ring her mother gave him when he was a bachelor, he registers an oath of vengeance in heaven and will not break it for the wealth of Venice.

One more point which Shakespeare added to the tale has yet to be mentioned. All the old versions of the Bond

Story tell how the cruel creditor was baffled by the wise judge who bade him cut his pound of flesh, but forbade him on pain of death to shed a drop of blood. This incident, which satisfied the simple minds of the Middle Ages, was retained by Shakespeare, since to have omitted it would have been to alter an essential feature of the story. But as a solution of the difficulty this incident does not satisfy our minds, and it cannot have satisfied Shakespeare's, for out of the inexhaustible treasury of his genius he added to this and to the other petty evasion about cutting neither more nor less than a pound, Portia's citation of the old law which condemns to death and to confiscation of goods an alien who plots against the life of a Venetian citizen. Here we have a lightning flash of true justice, as different from the legal quibbles of the old tales as day from night. Had Portia rested her decision upon these we feel that a more expert lawyer might have answered and defeated her. But to her citation of the forgotten law there is no possible answer. That Shylock had plotted against Antonio's life was self-evident. His refusal to provide a surgeon was in itself a confession of his desire to kill his enemy. And there is something of the character of divine retribution in the punishment that overtakes Shylock. He had sought to use the law as the instrument of a treacherous murder, and the law is turned against himself and becomes the weapon which strikes him down. The only possible objection that could be made to this addition of Shakespeare's has been stated by a somewhat captious German critic. How was it possible, he asks, that Portia and Portia alone should know of the existence of this law? As if aware beforehand of this objection, Shakespeare guarded against it by his invention of the learned Dr. Bellario, a figure unknown to any earlier version of the story. It is not only possible, but most

likely, that this famous jurist should know more of the Venetian laws than the Venetians themselves, and that he should have recalled one so ancient that it had been forgotten by all except himself. Portia's knowledge of this law is, of course, explained by her consultation with Bellario, her friend and kinsman.

One or two minor changes and additions which Shakespeare has made to the story of *Il Pecorone* might be mentioned; but enough has been said to show how he strengthened and heightened it, and changed it from a wildly romantic tale into a story which fastens upon our minds and compels our belief.

In his treatment of the Casket Story, too, Shakespeare has done something to make an old tale credible. In the story as it appears in the *Gesta Romanorum* there is absolutely no reason why the princess should be put to the test of the caskets, since she was already betrothed to the Emperor's son. In the play the reason for the test is to secure a fit husband for Portia; and in order to reassure us as to the fitness of the test, it is represented as the death-bed plan of the lady's virtuous father, and "holy men at their death have good inspirations." The conditions surrounding the choice are enough to frighten away the mere fortune-hunter; and the caskets with their mottoes are cunningly devised as tests of character. It is worth noting that Shakespeare altered the inscription of the lead casket. In the old tale it ran: "Who chooseth me shall find that God hath disposed him." In the play it reads: "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath." The first is a plain hint as to the contents; the second is a fair warning over the gate of matrimony. Only he who is ready to give and to risk his all is a true lover and can be a true husband; and it is the only true lover among all Portia's suitors who is guided by his love to read the riddle.

The old meaningless fairy tale has become in Shakespeare's hands a strong and suggestive allegory.

VI. Shakespeare's Characterization.

Shakespeare not only altered and improved the story as he found it in his sources, he really created the characters. The author of *Il Pecorone* seems to have been utterly devoid of the power of characterization. The weak and womanish Giannetto of his story sinks into insignificance when compared with Bassanio, the scholar, the soldier, the flower of the youth of Venice; Ansaldo, the loving foster-father of Giannetto, is but a shadow of Antonio; and the lady of Belmont, who drugs her suitors and seizes their money, is a very Circe beside Shakespeare's noble figure of Portia. The greatest character creation in the play is, of course, Shylock. The Jew in the old story is a mere name. We know nothing of his antecedents, of his environment, nor of his character except that he is obstinate in his determination to kill the merchant, and eager to make money when he cannot get the pound of flesh. There is nothing characteristically Jewish about him; a cruel usurer of any other race might have played the same part. But we know all about Shylock.

Touch by touch, with the greatest care and in the most minute detail Shakespeare presents us with a portrait of the man in his habit as he lived. And this portrait is in all its essential details that of a Jew. It has been well said that you might change the nationalities of many of Shakespeare's personages without endangering the inner consistency of their character. Hamlet is not essentially a Dane, nor Macbeth a Scotchman. But we cannot conceive of Shylock as other than a Jew. Not indeed the Jew of to-day as we know him in America or England, where a long period of toleration has gone far to obliterate

the darker features of his racial character, but the Jew of the Middle Ages, made what he was by centuries of bitter persecution. In his good as well as in his evil traits Shylock is a true representative of that despised yet proud race. His love of "our sacred nation," and his hatred of her oppressors, his strong family affections, shown in his devotion to his dead wife's memory and his outburst of passion at his daughter's flight, his self-righteousness and worship of the letter of the law, his greed of gain, his subtle and intellectual temperament, the fawning treachery by which he lures his enemy into the snare, the relentless obstinacy with which he pursues his revenge, even the physical cowardice which forbids him to seize a revenge which can only be obtained at the cost of his own life, are all characteristically Jewish features. His very speech is redolent of the Ghetto; he invokes a curse upon his tribe if he forgives his enemy, he swears by Jacob's staff and Father Abram, he justifies his usurious practices by the example of Jacob. His cry in the trial scene, "my deeds upon my head," seems like the echo of the terrible imprecation by which the Jews of Christ's day invoked his blood upon their heads and upon their children. In one point, at least, Shylock falls below the standard of his race—his willingness to embrace Christianity in order to save a part of his possessions. No fact in history is better attested by a cloud of witnesses from the days of the Maccabees to the late persecutions in Russia than the readiness of the Jew to die for his religion. Yet there have been, of course, exceptions. In Spain and Portugal during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries thousands of Jews, nominally at least, accepted Christianity. Dr. Lopez himself was a converted Jew. It is hardly fair, therefore, to blame Shakespeare, as has sometimes been done, for making Shylock more cowardly in this respect than so

many thousands of his race who preferred death to apostasy. Once more it may be repeated that Shakespeare's purpose was to portray not the Jew, but a Jew, a bad Jew at that, a repulsive, but yet a sympathetic character ; repulsive on account of his evil qualities, sympathetic because of his common humanity.

One of the means always employed by a great dramatist to bring out and develop the characters of his plays is the principle of contrast. Nowhere is this method used more effectively than in the *Merchant of Venice*, where the figure of Shylock is thrown into strong relief by the contrasting characters of Antonio and Portia. Antonio has many of the qualities that Shylock lacks, magnanimity, liberality, capacity for friendship. He is fitly called the royal merchant. On the other hand his lofty idealism renders him imprudent in the ordinary affairs of life; and his passivity of character renders him an easy prey to Shylock's relentless energy. His treatment of Shylock has been greatly blamed by modern critics and has been attributed to race-hatred; but it seems rather as if it were due to his detestation of Shylock's usurious practices. All through the Middle Ages the taking of interest was under the ban of the church. The very law of Queen Elizabeth, which permitted ten per cent. to be taken on a loan, declared 'usury,' that is, interest of any kind, to be a sinful and detestable thing. Shylock himself attributes Antonio's insults to his practice of taking interest, and it seems plain, therefore, that it was not pure Anti-Semitism, but an innate loathing of practices so contrary to public morality as then understood, and so repugnant to his own character, that prompted Antonio's actions. Yet even so we cannot hold him guiltless, and the punishment which comes upon him in the course of the play shows, we may believe, that Shakespeare also held this view.

Portia, one of the most attractive of all Shakespeare's women is a perfect flower of the Italian Renaissance, beautiful, rich, splendor-loving, cultured, and courteous. It would take too long to enter into a detailed analysis of her character; but two points may be noticed in which she contrasts strongly with Shylock. The first is her attitude toward money. With Shylock money is an end in itself. His whole life, until disturbed by the passion for revenge, is devoted to acquiring wealth. At home he starves his servant and grudges his daughter the pleasure that her youth demands. Portia, on the other hand, regards her inherited fortune simply as a means to an end, the rich and varied life of the Renaissance. Her home is a palace surrounded by a noble park, she keeps a company of trained musicians, she entertains nobles and princes. Yet she is so far from being spoiled by the circumstances of her life that she passes over her princely suitors to bestow her heart upon a bankrupt gentleman and rejoices to strip herself of her fortune in order to bestow it upon her lover. Since money to her is only a means of obtaining happiness she accounts it a mere trifle in comparison with love and friendship, and offers to pay Antonio's debt twenty times over rather than have Bassanio grieve for him. The Socialist might perhaps quarrel with the accumulation of so much wealth in the hands of an individual, even when the individual chances to be a Portia, but most of us will long continue to regard her as Shakespeare's ideal picture of the true relation of man to money.

Again Portia is shown in strong contrast to Shylock in her conception of law and justice. Shylock is a worshipper of the letter that slayeth; and his notion of justice is a scrupulous fulfillment of the exact requirements of the law no matter what the consequences may be. Portia, on the other hand, stands as the representative of the

higher justice of the spirit which saveth alive. Her relation to Shylock has been compared to that of Equity to the Common Law: it would be better, I think, to liken it to the relation existing between Judaism and Christianity. The law of the Jews was a written law, exact, formal and precise; and in the development of Judaism righteousness came to consist in the literal observance of every jot and tittle of the law. This formal righteousness found its complete development in the Pharisees of Christ's day; and it was against this sect above all others that Christ launched his most passionate denunciations. The essence of Christianity, on the other hand, is spiritual. It does not abolish the law, but explains and interprets it in a spiritual sense. The very conception of God changes in the translation from Judaism to Christianity; to the Jew the Almighty was a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children; to the Christian God is Love. And as justice was the highest attribute of the Jewish conception of God, so mercy is that of the Christian. Portia's famous address to Shylock is, in fact, an appeal to the Jew to embrace the ideals of Christianity.

To this view of the relation between the two chief characters of the play, it has been objected that Portia overcomes Shylock not by love, but by insisting, with a vigor equal to his own, upon the letter of the law, and, moreover, that she shows no mercy to the Jew when in her power. These objections are specious but not, I think, well grounded. It is true that the Jew is by a legal quibble forbidden to take his legal penalty on pain of death; but this is part of the old story which Shakespeare did not invent and could not alter. On the other hand, Shakespeare's own addition to the trial scene is as I have already pointed out, no legal quibble, but a true interpretation of the spirit of the law. In essence, Shylock's bond was

void, because under cover of the law he sought to commit a heinous crime. Shakespeare expresses this in dramatic form by Portia's citation of the old law punishing with death and confiscation any attempt upon the part of an alien against the life of a Venetian citizen.

The second objection is equally unfounded. Portia herself, it is true, extends no direct offer of mercy to Shylock. But such an offer did not lie within her power; she had simply to announce the penalty. The Duke, however, as the representative of the Christian state of Venice, at once steps into her place and grants the Jew his life even before he asks it. The confiscation of his goods is reduced to an appropriation of one-half of them for the benefit of his daughter; and the obligation which is laid upon him of becoming a Christian was, of course, in that day considered as an act of the highest mercy, since it would result in the salvation of his soul. We must be careful not to attribute to Shakespeare the feelings of our day, and speak of this obligation as something worse than death itself. Here at least Shakespeare was a man of his own time. Yet if we wish to realize how far superior he rose to the fierce Anti-Semitism of his day, we have but to compare the judgment passed upon Shylock with the brutal and heartless treatment which Barrabas receives, with the evident approbation of the poet, at the hands of the Christian governor of Malta.

In fact it is not too much to say that the Anti-Semitism which appears in the *Merchant of Venice* is confined to the inferior characters and to the lower classes. Shylock, though a Jew, has a recognized status under the Venetian law. The Duke rises from his bed at night to help him find his runaway daughter; the courts of Venice are open to him as to a Christian, and he appeals to the law with the full certainty of obtaining justice. Antonio's attitude

toward him has already been accounted for; Bassanio, the best representative of the gentlemen of Venice, invites him to dinner both before and after the negotiation of the loan; and Portia, who stands out as the champion of Christian ideals, utters no word which reveals anything like race-hatred on her part. Yet the existence of such race-hatred in Venice is by no means concealed. To Launcelot Shylock is the devil incarnate, and Jessica is likely to be damned merely because she is the Jew's daughter. The rabble of Venice follow Shylock through the streets mocking his lamentations over his loss of his daughter and his ducats. Salanio who has no private cause of hatred calls him the "dog Jew," and in the trial scene Gratiano, the rude and bold-voiced jester, exhausts upon him a rich vocabulary of abuse. We can, I fancy, without a very great stretch of imagination conclude from this array of witnesses what was Shakespeare's own attitude toward the Anti-Semitism of his day. As one might expect of the gentle poet, the profound philosopher, the sympathetic student of humanity, he takes his stand with Portia against the rabble of the streets and the hot young bloods of Venice; and Portia's eulogy of mercy might well express the poet's own plea for tolerance of the persecuted Jews. Certainly no poet, tinged in the least with Anti-Semitism would, or could, have put into Shylock's mouth that famous vindication of a Jew's humanity which, in the words of a German critic, sums up the judgment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in condemnation of the oppressors and in apology for the oppressed.

Conclusion.

In conclusion then, it seems plain that the *Merchant of Venice* had its origin in the outburst of the Anti-Semitism

which accompanied the trial and execution of Dr. Lopez, and the revival of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*. Lopez was not the original of Shylock, nor was the *Jew of Malta* the prototype of Shakespeare's play. But we may safely say that the events of this year impelled Shakespeare to give a realistic picture of the Jew as he then existed; that in accordance with his prevailing methods of composition he took up an old play and worked it over to suit his purposes; that in accordance with the prevailing tone of his dramas at this time he set his portrait of the Jew in a framework of romantic comedy; and, finally, that his play contained a veiled, but to the understanding eye, clearly apparent, acknowledgment of the Jew's humanity and a plea for tolerance. That this acknowledgment and plea were discerned by the playgoing populace of his time it would be too much to say. We know that Burbage, the first impersonator of Shylock was 'made up' to resemble Judas in the old miracle plays in order to impress spectators with the Jew's villainy. After the Restoration, Shylock was degraded into a grotesque comic character. From this shameful misconception of Shakespeare's purpose the character was rescued by the great tragedian Macklin, and in our own times the pendulum has swung to the other extreme and the tendency has been to exalt the character of Shylock and portray him as the martyr-representative of his race.

Early in the nineteenth century Heine, the famous Jewish poet, saw a performance of the *Merchant of Venice* at Drury Lane. Behind him in the box there stood a beautiful English girl who at the end of the trial scene burst into tears and sobbed out: "The poor man is wronged." Here we have a true representative of the modern spirit, somewhat too susceptible, indeed, to the impression of the moment, but, on the whole, sympathetic

and generous in judgment. The poor man was wronged, not indeed in the trial scene, where his revengeful purpose was withstood and his intended crime punished, but in all the circumstances that made that crime possible, wronged by the law that made him an alien among Venetian citizens, wronged by the society that stole his money, spat on his beard and called him dog, wronged in his purse, his person, and his race. It marks a great advance in the ethical conceptions of our day that it is no longer possible to portray Shylock as a wholly villainous, much less as a comic character.

Merchant of Venice

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Duke of Venice.
The Prince of Morocco, } *suitors to Portia.*
The Prince of Arragon, }
Antonio, *a merchant of Venice.*
Bassanio, *his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.*
Salanio, }
Salarino, } *friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*
Gratiano, }
Salerio, }
Lorenzo, *in love with Jessica.*
Shylock, *a rich Jew.*
Tubal, *a Jew, his friend.*
Launcelot Gobbo, *the clown, servant to Shylock.*
Old Gobbo, *father to Launcelot.*
Leonardo, *servant to Bassanio.*
Balthasar, } *servants to Portia.*
Stephano, }

Portia, *a rich heiress.*
Nerissa, *her waiting-maid.*
Jessica, *daughter to Shylock.*

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Jailer, Servants to Portia, and other attendants.

Scene: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*

The Merchant of Venice.

ACT FIRST.

Scene I.

Venice. A street.

Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.
Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.
Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still

Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object, that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

Salar. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks;
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this; and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,

Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;
And other of such vinegar aspect,
That they 'll not show their teeth in way ot smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.
Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.
Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.
Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.
Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?
Salar. We 'll make our leisures to attend on yours.
[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*
Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you: but, at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.
Bass. I will not fail you.
Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:

They lose it that do buy it with much care:
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.
Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.
Gra. Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks,—
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,
And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!'
O my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I 'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:
I 'll end my exhortation after dinner.
Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time:

I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I 'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.
[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them: and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is, to come fairly off from the great debts,
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;

And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost: but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well; and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;

For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors: and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity

comes sooner by white hairs; but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations: therefore, the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead,—whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you.—will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and,

according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that 's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself. I am much afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, 'if you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Boune?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he!—why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Fauconbridge, the young baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: and the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary

casket; for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I 'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Mountferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man.

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word, the prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Venice. A public place.

Enter Bassanio and Shylock.

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no: my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter Antonio.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!
Bass. Shylock, do you hear?
Shy. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
Ant. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow,
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I 'll break a custom. [*To Bass.*] Is he yet possess'd
How much ye would?
Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats,
Ant. And for three months.
Shy. I had forgot; three months, you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but hear you;

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep,—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third,—

Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take interest; not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire, ...
. . . . . .
The skilful shepherd pill'd me certain wands,
And . . . . . .
. stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
But note me, signior.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;

A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a godly outside falsehood hath!

Shy. Three thousand ducats; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then, let me see the rate.

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have moneys:' you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys'?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.

If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed of barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break, thou mayest with better face
Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you 'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, i' faith: I 'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I 'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that 's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect

The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship:
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond;
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently
I will be with you.

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Exit Shylock.*
The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant. Come on: in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT SECOND.

Scene I.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Morocco and his train; Portia, Nerissa, and others attending.

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant: by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.
Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.
Mor. Even for that I thank you:

Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be advised.

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple: after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets, and exeunt.*

Scene II.

Venice. A street.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,'—or rather an honest woman's son;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;—well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:' to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the

devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

Enter Old Gobbo, with a basket.

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. Be God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let 's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot,

your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I 'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter Bassanio, with Leonardo and other followers.

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a Servant.*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here 's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins,—

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me,—as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is,—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.
Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.
Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit:
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.
Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.
Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.
Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book I shall have good fortune! Go to, here 's a simple line of life: here 's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! aleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she 's a good wench for this gear. Father, come; I 'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye. [*Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo.*
Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.*

Gra. Signior Bassanio,—

Bass. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano:
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pains
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconster'd in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say 'amen;'
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.
Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.
Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The same. A room in Shylock's house.

Enter Jessica and Launcelot.

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell; and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.
Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian do not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.
Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,

I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

Scene IV.

The same. A street.

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Salanio.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.
Gra. We have not made good preparation.
Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.
Salan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter Launcelot, with a letter.

Friend Launcelot, what 's the news?
Laun. And it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify.
Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.
Gra. Love-news, in faith.
Laun. By your leave, sir.
Lor. Whither goest thou?
Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.
Lor. Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica

I will not fail her; speak it privately.
Go, gentlemen, [*Exit Launcelot.*
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I 'll begone about it straight.

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'Tis good we do so. [*Exeunt Salar. and Salan.*

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

The same. Before Shylock's house.

Enter Shylock and Launcelot.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me:—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;—
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun. Why, Jessica!
Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.
Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter Jessica.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?
Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I 'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. I am right loath to go:
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.
Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach.
Shy. So do I his.
Laun. And they have conspired together,—I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in th' afternoon.
Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter

My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewës eye. [*Exit.*

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were, 'Farewell, mistress;' nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him; and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in:
Perhaps I will return immediately.
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
Fast bind, fast find,
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit.*

Scene VI.

The same.

Enter Gratiano and Salarino, masqued.

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!
Gra. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!
Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I 'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who 's within?

Enter Jessica, above, in boy's clothes.

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I 'll swear that I do know your tongue.
Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.
Jes. Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?
Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.
Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.
Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.
Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some mo ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit above.*
Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.
Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Enter Jessica, below.

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exit with Jessica and Salarino.*

Enter Antonio.

Ant. Who 's there?
Gra. Signior Antonio!
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano; where are all the rest?
'Tis nine o'clock: our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.
Gra. I am glad on 't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Flourish of cornets. Enter Portia, with the Prince of Morocco, and their trains.

Por. Go draw aside the curtains, and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.
Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;'
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;'
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
How shall I know if I do choose the right?
Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince;
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.
Mor. Some god direct my judgement! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?

'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
Must give,—for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I 'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
' Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand:
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afeared of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that 's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no farther, but chose here?
Let 's see once more this saying graved in gold;
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
Why, that 's the lady; all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint:
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia:
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits; but they come,
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.

One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is 't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought: it were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she 's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that 's insculp'd upon;
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

Por. There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket.*

Mor. O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I 'll read the writing.

[*Reads*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgement old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*

Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII.

Venice. A street.

Enter Salarino and Salanio.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.
Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.
Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the Duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica:
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!'
Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.
Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught:
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.
Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.
Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, 'Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry; and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there:'
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.
Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.
Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IX.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Nerissa and a Servitor.

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee: draw the curtain straight:
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Arragon, Portia, and their trains.

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.
Ar. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage:
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.
Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.
Ar. And so have I address'd me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'

What many men desire! that 'many' may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves:'
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*

Por. [*Aside*] Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Ar. What 's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,

Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
'Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.'
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend, and judge, are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures.

Ar. What is here?

[*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone: you are sped.
Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I 'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroath.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Where is my lady?
Por. Here: what would my lord?
Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love:
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.
Por. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.
Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD.

Scene I.

Venice. A street.

Enter Salanio and Salarino.

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,— O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter Shylock.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That 's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damned for it.

Salar. That 's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salan. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

Shy. I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what 's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what 's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter Tubal.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew. [*Exeunt Salan. Salar. and Servant.*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so:—and I know not what 's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God! Is it true, is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! here? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I 'll plague him; I 'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa, and Attendants.

Por. I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
There 's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,

Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,—
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you 'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'er-look'd me, and divided me;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours! O, these naughty times
Puts bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak any thing.

Bass. Promise me life, and I 'll confess the truth.

Por. Well then, confess and live.

Bass. 'Confess,' and 'love,'

Had been the very sum of my confession:
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.
Por. Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

Music, whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself.

Song.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.
It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I 'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:

So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which makes such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian; beauty, in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess!
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass. What find I here?
[*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or, whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs

The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes,—
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you

I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of—something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring

Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me:
And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved, for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honoured in your marriage.

. . . . . .

Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salerio, a Messenger from Venice.

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.
Por. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.
Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.
Saler. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*
Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.
Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate. [*Bassanio opens the letter.*
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio: what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.
Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,

That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins—I was a gentleman,
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Hath all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Saler. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had

The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night;
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,

And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*reads*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste: but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Venice. A street.

Enter Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, and Jailer.

Shy. Jailer, look to him: tell not me of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Jailer, look to him.

Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shy. I 'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty jailer, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.
Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shy. I 'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I 'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I 'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond. [*Exit.*
Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.
Ant. Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.
Salar. I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.
Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law:
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of the state;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:
These griefs and losses have so bated me,

That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, jailer, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and Balthasar.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;

Therefore no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition;
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart;
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So fare you well, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.
[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*
Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit.*

Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of; we 'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us?

Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I 'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with a braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal: then I 'll repent,
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them:
And twenty of these puny lies I 'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.

Ner. Why, shall we turn to men?

Por. Fie, what a question 's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter!
But come, I 'll tell thee all my whole device

When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park-gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

The same. A garden.

Enter Launcelot and Jessica.

Laun. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be o' good cheer; for, truly, I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good: and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter Lorenzo.

Jes. I 'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there's no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth; for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

. . . . . .

Lor. I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence; and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only 'cover' is the word.

Lor. Will you cover, then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt

thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon: first, let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.
Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.
Jes. Well, I 'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH.

Scene I.

Venice. A court of justice.

Enter the Duke, the Magnifícoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salerio, and others.

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your Grace.
Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.
Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.
Saler. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter Shylock.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;

And where thou now exacts the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I 'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain their urine; for affection,
Master of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer,
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,

Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a woollen bag-pipe: but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what 's harder?—
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no moe offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.
Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer
'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgement: answer; shall I have it?
Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.
Saler. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.
Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.
Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.
Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:

You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Enter Nerissa, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.
[*Presenting a letter.*
Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit though to make.
Gra. O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous.
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.
Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you 'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.
Clerk. [*reads*] Your Grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, —the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend,—comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.
Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter Portia for Balthasar.

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?
Por. I did, my lord.
Duke. You are welcome: take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?
Por. I am informed throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
Por. Is your name Shylock?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us

Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit;

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgement: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.

Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shy. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond:—doth it not, noble judge?—
'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so express'd: but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. You, merchant, have you any thing to say?
Ant. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I 'll pay it instantly with all my heart.
Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.
Gra. I have a wife, who, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could

Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.
Shy. These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!
[*Aside.*
We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge!
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!
Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh:'
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shalt see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gra. O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.
Bass. Here is the money.
Por. Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.
Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I 'll stay no longer question.
Por. Tarry, Jew;
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,

Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers:
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit Shylock.*

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,

We freely cope your courteous pains withal.
Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.
Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.
Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.
Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
Give me your gloves, I 'll wear them for your sake;
[*To Ant.*
And, for your love, I 'll take this ring from you:
[*To Bass.*
Do not draw back your hand; I 'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.
Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.
Por. I will have nothing else but only this;
And now methinks I have a mind to it.
Bass. There 's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.
Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.
Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
And if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.
[*Exit Gratiano.*

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The same. A street.

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed
And let him sign it: we 'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice

Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.
Por. That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully:
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
Gra. That will I do.
Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
[*Aside to Portia.*
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.
Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we 'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud*] Away! make haste: thou know'st where I will tarry.
Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?
[*Exeunt.*

ACT FIFTH.

Scene I.

Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house.

Enter Lorenzo and Jessica.

Lor. The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls,
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jes. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes. In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.
Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter Stephano.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?
Steph. A friend.
Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?
Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.
Lor. Who comes with her?
Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?
Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!
Lor. Who calls?
Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!
Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.
Laun. Sola! where? where?
Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him there 's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming. And yet no matter: why should we go in? My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you, Within the house, your mistress is at hand; And bring your music forth into the air.

[*Exit Stephano.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night Become the touches of sweet harmony. Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold: There 's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st But in his motion like an angel sings, Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins; Such harmony is in immortal souls; But whilst this muddy vesture of decay Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn! With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear, And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive: For do but note a wild and wanton herd, Or race of youthful and unhandled colts, Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud, Which is the hot condition of their blood;

If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter Portia and Nerissa.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.
Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.
Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!
Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.
Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.
Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.
Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,

When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*

Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our husbands' welfare,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.

Por. Go in, Nerissa;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.
[*A tucket sounds.*

Lor. Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 'tis a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and their followers.

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;

For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me:
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.
Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.
Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.
Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house:
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.
Gra. [*To Nerissa*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk:
. . . . . .
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what 's the matter?
Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'
Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on 's face that had it.
Gra. He will, and if he live to be a man.
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man,

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief:
And 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.
Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone.
Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed
Until I see the ring.

Ner. Nor I in yours
Till I again see mine.
Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.
Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for 't but some woman had the ring.
Bass. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffer'd him to go displeased away;
Even he that had held up the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor,

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I 'll not deny him any thing I have.

. . . . . .

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.
Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.
Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself,—
Por. Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one: swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.
Bass. Nay, but hear me:
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.
Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.
Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.
Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio: swear to keep this ring.
Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

. . . . . .

Por. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure:
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:

There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now return'd; I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.

Ant. I am dumb.

. . . . . .

Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.

Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.

Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.

. . . . . .

Gra. Well, while I live I 'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt.*

Critical and Explanatory Notes

ACT I.

Scene I.

The first few scenes of a drama are usually devoted to what is technically called the Exposition; that is, to explaining the situation, to giving some idea of the characters of the drama, and to getting the story, or action, started. There are various ways in which this may be done. In the *Comedy of Errors*, for instance, the old merchant Ægeon relates in the first scene the whole story of his life, introducing among other things the two pairs of twin boys on whose amazing similarity the whole action of the drama turns. In *Richard III.* the chief character advances at once to the footlights and tells the audience that he is the villain of the play and that he proposes to usurp the crown of England. These two plays are early works of Shakespeare, and do not show by any means such mastery of the playwright's art as does the *Merchant of Venice.* Here the characters are introduced and the story started in the simplest and most natural manner, that is, in conversation between the personages of the play. We see the great merchant who gives his name to the play, and hear of his richly-laden ships at sea and of the melancholy that has overshadowed his spirits. Gratiano, the comic gentleman, reveals his own character in his attempt to laugh Antonio out of his sadness. Finally, Bassanio, the hero, or, at least, the leading gentleman of the drama, sets the story going by his appeal to Antonio for a loan wherewith he may go a-courting. Antonio's answer shows on how precarious a footing his riches rest, and his willingness to borrow at any risk

in order to oblige his friend is the direct cause of the future complications of the play.

1. *sad.* This quiet sadness is one of the distinguishing features of Antonio's character. It is not, however, easy to assign a definite reason for it. We ought, perhaps, to think of it merely as a constitutional disposition toward melancholy. Antonio seems to be one of those unhappy rich men who have nothing in particular to live for. If he had any object in life, it was to assist his young friend, Bassanio, and he now suspects that this friend is soon to be separated from him by marriage. This melancholy, which leads him to regard the world as a stage where he has but a sad part to play, seems also to make him somewhat careless as to how he plays his part, and perhaps explains why he was foolish enough to sign a bond with such a penalty as Shylock suggested.

5. *I am to learn;* I have yet to learn.

8. *ocean;* a trisyllable: o-ce-an. So in ll. 102 and 139 *opinion* and *occasions* have one syllable more than our present pronunciation gives them. In Shakespeare's day the pronunciation of such terminations as *-ean*, *-ion*, etc., was unsettled. Sometimes they were pronounced as two syllables, sometimes as one. Thus *affections*, l. 16, and *opinion*, l. 91, are pronounced in our present fashion. The rhythm of the line will always show the proper pronunciation. When such a termination occurred at the close of the line, it was usually, though not always, as l. 91 shows, pronounced as a dissyllable.

12. *petty traffickers;* the little ships that dance and seem to curt'sy in the wake of the portly argosies.

18. *where sits the wind.* This passage was, perhaps, suggested by some lines in the first scene of the *Jew of Malta*, where Barrabas is represented as watching the wind and calculating what effect it will have on his ships at sea.

23. *blow me to an ague;* give me a chill, make me shake with fear.

27. *Andrew;* used here as the name of a ship. It was common in Shakespeare's day to name ships after saints. Thus

in the Spanish Armada there were ships called St. Philip, St. Matthew, St. John, and St. Martin.

29. *her burial;* the sand in which the ship lies half-buried.

35. *This;* the word is accompanied by an emphatic gesture indicating a great amount.

38. *bechanced;* if it chanced. The participle is used conditionally.

40. *is sad to think upon;* is sad because he is thinking of.

42–44. This statement of Antonio's does not agree with what he says to Bassanio in ll. 177, 178. Perhaps he does not care to tell Salanio and Salarino exactly how his fortune stands.

47. This line can be scanned either by pronouncing *neither* as a word of one syllable, *ne'er*, which is not infrequent with Shakespeare; or by contracting *let us* to *let's*. The latter method is perhaps the better.

50. This line is an Alexandrine, that is, a line of six feet, with an extra syllable at the end. Scan:

"Becáuse | you áre | not sád. || Now bý | two heád- | ed Ján | us."

Janus; the Roman god of gates and doors, who was always represented with two faces, looking before and after.

52. *peep through their eyes;* half-close the eyes, as men do when they laugh loudly.

53. *laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;* laugh as foolishly as parrots do when they mock a bag-piper with silly cackles.

56. *Nestor;* the oldest and wisest of the Grecian chiefs who fought at Troy. If he pronounced a jest laughable, it was certainly very funny.

62–64. Antonio's courtesy will not allow Salarino to say that he is driven away by the arrival of worthier friends.

66. *when shall we laugh;* when shall we have a merry meeting.

67. *must it be so;* must you always be so reserved.

68. "We'll wait upon you whenever you are at leisure to receive us."

69. The last two syllables in the proper names are in each case pronounced as monosyllables. Scan:

"My Lord | Bassán | io, sínce | you've fóund | Antón | io."

77. *I hold the world but as the world;* I do not think the world any better or happier than it really is.

78. *a stage.* This comparison of the world, or of human life, to a stage is frequent and not unnatural with Shakespeare, the player and dramatist. In *As You Like It*, II. vii. 39. he says:

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

And in *Macbeth*, V. v. 24. he says:

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more."

79. *play the fool.* In opposition to Antonio, Gratiano would like to play the part of the Fool, or Jester, in the drama of life.

80. *old wrinkles;* the wrinkles of old age.

81. *my liver.* The physiology of Shakespeare's day declared the liver to be the seat of the emotions, such as fear, courage, love, or hate. Thus Falstaff (*2 King Henry IV*, IV. iii. 112 seq.) speaks of a "liver pale and white, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice." "But sherris" (wine), he goes on to say, "warms it; . . . and then the vital commoners and petty inland spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage; and this valour comes of sherris."

82. *mortifying;* used here in its etymological meaning, i.e., *killing*, probably with allusion to the old belief that every sigh or groan cost the heart a drop of blood. Thus in *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, III. ii. 97. Shakespeare says of Helena:

"All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,
With sighs of love that cost the fresh blood dear."

83. "Sit cold and lifeless like the marble monument of his grandfather."

85. *peevish.* The jaundice is a disease frequently caused by mental trouble. A medical dictionary actually names peevishness as one of the causes of this disease.

90. *a wilful stillness entertain;* cultivate an obstinate silence. The subject, *who*, is understood from *whose*, l. 88.

93. Note the omission of the antecedent, *one*, before *who*.

95–97. Compare the saying of Solomon: "Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is accounted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding." (Proverbs xvii. 28.)

98–99. *damn those ears.* The jest, such as it is, lies in the allusion to a well-known passage in the Sermon on the Mount. See Matthew v. 22. Note the omission of the subject pronoun before the verb, *would damn.*

101. *melancholy bait;* bait of melancholy.

102. *fool gudgeon.* According to Izaak Walton, the great authority on old-fashioned angling, the gudgeon is a stupid and easily taken fish.

110. *for this gear;* a colloquial expression of no very definite meaning; in this passage perhaps equivalent to *for this reason*, i.e., on account of what you have said. We may imagine Antonio saying this with a faint smile, as if Gratiano's chatter had for a moment roused him from his melancholy.

111–112. These lines are doggerel, that is, they are written in a jingling rhythm which is not reducible to regular metre.

122–139; 140–152; 161–176. These speeches deserve careful study. They must not be read in the light of modern American conceptions as to the duty of all men to work for a living, and as to the shamefulness of fortune-hunting. No one in Shakespeare's day would have thought it at all unbecoming in a poor man to seek the hand of a rich woman whom he chanced to be in love with. And it is plain from what Antonio says that he, who was the soul of honor, saw nothing improper in Bassanio's having squandered his fortune, such as it was, in living beyond his means.

126–127. "Lament having to give up my extravagant mode of life."

128. *come fairly off from;* get honorably clear of.

132–133. "Your affection authorizes me to confide in you."

137. *within the eye of honour;* within the limits of what can be regarded as honorable.

L. of C.

139. *your occasions;* your requirements.

141. *flight;* a technical word in archery. Arrows of the same *flight* had the same length and weight, and so would under similar circumstances fly the same distance.

143. This line is an Alexandrine. Compare l. 50.

144. *this childhood proof;* this experience of childish days.

145. *pure innocence;* mere folly. Bassanio feels that from a business point of view it is rather absurd to ask his chief creditor to lend him money to go a-courting with. But Antonio is not so much a creditor as a loving friend, and so Bassanio dares to propose this scheme to him.

148. *self way;* same way.

150. *As I will watch;* inasmuch as I shall watch.

150–151. *or to find . . . Or bring;* either to find . . . or to bring. It is not quite clear how Bassanio meant to pay back the further loan, *your latter hazard*, to Antonio in case his wooing was unsuccessful. But, as he knew nothing of the conditions by which alone Portia's hand was to be won, and had a well-founded idea that the rich heiress cared for him (see ll. 163–164 and Scene ii. ll. 123–133), he did not dwell upon the unpleasant possibility of failure.

154. *to wind about my love with circumstances;* to approach me, who love you so well, in this roundabout way.

156. *in making question of my uttermost;* in seeming to doubt my readiness to help you to the utmost.

161. *richly left;* rich in a fortune left her by her father. It is worth noting that Bassanio, although he mentions Portia's wealth, does not dwell upon it; but goes on to speak of her virtues and her beauty, which had made a deep impression on him in earlier days (see Scene ii, ll. 123–126) before he had lost his fortune.

162. *fairer than that word;* better than beautiful.

163. *virtues.* This word had a broader meaning in Shakespeare's time than it has to-day. It denotes here not only Portia's moral, but also her intellectual qualities.

165. *nothing undervalued;* in no way inferior.

166. *Cato;* Cato the Younger, one of the last heroes of republican Rome, famous for the strictness of his life and the loftiness of his ideals. His daughter, Portia, wife of Marcus Brutus, who helped to murder Cæsar, inherited her father's virtues, and was famous in a dissolute age for her purity of life. When it was evident that her husband's attempt to restore the republic was doomed to failure, she committed suicide. Shakespeare has drawn a noble portrait of her in his *Julius Cæsar.*

171. *Colchos;* Colchis, a country on the Black Sea. According to Grecian legend it was here that the wonderful golden fleece was guarded by a dragon. Jason, a Grecian hero, came in search of it, and by the aid of the enchantress Medea succeeded in carrying it off.

175. *presages me such thrift;* foretells me such success.

178–179. *commodity to raise;* merchandise on which to borrow.

181. *rack'd;* strained, like a man on the rack.

182. *furnish thee to Belmont;* equip you for paying your addresses to Portia in a proper fashion.

185. "To get it either on my credit or by way of a friendly loan."

Note the rhymed tag with which the scene closes; and see remarks on the use of rhyme on p. 203.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What is the cause of Antonio's melancholy?

What traits of his character have been revealed in this scene?

What sort of character is Gratiano?

What should we think of Bassanio's scheme for paying his debts by means of a rich marriage?

Why did Bassanio need another loan to enable him to court Portia?

What do Antonio's speeches to Bassanio show as to the relation that exists between them?

How far has the plot been unfolded in this scene?

Scene II.

This scene belongs to the so-called Casket Story. It introduces the heroine of the play, and tells us of the restrictions which her father's strange will has placed upon her marriage. Portia's remarks on her various suitors give us some idea of her character—not a complete idea, to be sure, for the satirical humor which plays so mischievously about her lovers is only one phase of her rich and varied character. The mention of Bassanio in ll. 123–133 shows something of the feeling which Portia entertains for him. The message from the Prince of Morocco (ll. 136–138) marks the opening action of the Casket Story.

1. Portia, like Antonio, is not in the happiest of humors when the play opens. But the cause of her touch of melancholy is easy to discover. Young, talented, beautiful, and rich, she is surrounded by suitors for whom she cares less than nothing, yet any one of whom may, by a stroke of luck, become her husband. The man to whom she has secretly given her heart, on the other hand, remains away from Belmont. Fortunately her sense of humor saves her from kicking in vain against the pricks, and she makes the best of a bad situation by laughing over its humorous side with her companion.

Nerissa, it should be noted, is not a lady's maid like the soubrette of the modern stage. She is, herself, a lady, though neither so rich nor so well bred as Portia. It was still common in Shakespeare's day for girls of good families to enter into attendance upon ladies of higher rank, from whom they received not only material benefits, but also social and intellectual training.

3. *You would be.* Evidently Nerissa does not take Portia's weariness of the world very seriously. "If you were as badly off as you are well off," she says, "you might have reason to be aweary of the world."

7, 8. Explain the play on the word *mean* in these lines.

14. *chapels.* A chapel was originally a shrine within a

church; then it came to mean a small place of worship, either within the church itself, or detached from it.

26–27. Note the play on the word *will* in these lines.

34. *his meaning;* the casket he (your father) meant to be chosen.

36. *who you shall rightly love.* There has been a great deal of dispute over this passage, for a brief summary of which see Textual Notes, p. 162. The whole tone of the passage goes, I think, to show that the word *you*, omitted by many editors, belongs in the text. Portia is complaining that her freedom of choice is abolished by her father's will. Nerissa answers that, no doubt, all will turn out for the best. The lottery will never be rightly chosen except by a man whom Portia loves, and so it will be the same as if her choice had never been restricted. *Who* in this line is in the objective case, as often in Shakespeare's day. Thus Jessica says (II. vi. 30), "For who love I so much."

45. *talk of his horse.* The Neapolitans in Shakespeare's time were famous for their horsemanship.

49. *County Palatine.* *County* means Count, as often in Shakespeare. A Count Palatine is one who rules over a district called a Palatinate, where he exercises almost regal authority. The word is derived from the name of one of the seven hills of Rome, Mons Palatinus, on which the dwelling of the emperors, the *palatium* (palace), stood. A Polish Count Palatine had cut something of a figure in London a few years before Shakespeare came there, and it is possible that he meant this character to be thought of as a Pole. After all, it makes little difference to what nationality the solemn prig belongs.

51. *choose;* do as you please, take me or leave me.

53. *The weeping philosopher.* A famous Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, was given this title on account of his melancholy views of life.

54. *unmannerly sadness;* unsuitable solemnity.

55–56. *death's-head with a bone in his mouth;* a skull and cross bones.

63. *a better bad habit;* a more pronounced trick.

75. *Latin, French, nor Italian.* In Shakespeare's day a scholar was expected to be able to speak Latin fluently; French was the courtly language of Europe; and a traveller in Italy ought to have known something of the language of that land. But this young Englishman knew no tongue but his own; and English in that day was almost unknown outside of Great Britain. Fauconbridge has something of the true John Bull about him: English is good enough for him; if others do not know it, so much the worse for them.

80–81. *round hose.* Hose were knee-breeches. *Round hose* were the fashion at this time in France; they were not loose about the thigh, but padded out till they were quite round, as may be seen in old portraits. The point of the joke on Fauconbridge is not merely that he imitated foreign styles, as Englishmen at this time were constantly doing, but that he mixed up the styles of various countries. Robert Greene, a writer of Shakespeare's day, laughs at an Englishman who wore a Spanish jacket, Venetian trousers, a French hat, and a German cloak. Fauconbridge's manners were apparently as irregular as his costume.

83. It is amusing to note that after James of Scotland ascended the English throne, the word *Scottish* in this line was changed to *other*, for fear of offending his majesty.

85. *a neighborly charity*, in that he did not return the blow. Of course he was really afraid to do so; but Portia mischievously pretends to believe that he was too good a neighbor to Fauconbridge to hit him back.

88. *the Frenchman.* France and Scotland were old allies against England and usually got the worst of it. So here the Frenchman is represented as taking the Scotchman's part and getting a box on the ear for his pains.

96. *and*, another form of *an* (if).

104. *Rhenish wine;* the strongest possible temptation to a German toper.

113–114. *by some other sort;* in some other way.

116. *Sibylla.* There were nine sibyls, or prophetesses, in classical legend, one of whom, the Cumæan Sibyl, obtained from Apollo the boon that she should live as many years as she could hold grains of sand in her hand.

117. *Diana.* The moon-goddess and virgin huntress was the special patroness of chaste maidens.

127. *as I think so was he called.* Portia cannot help agreeing with Nerissa; but she is so anxious to hide her feeling for Bassanio that she pretends not to be very sure of his name.

135. *the four strangers.* This phrase is not consistent with the preceding passage in which six suitors are mentioned. Probably only four suitors were described in the play as Shakespeare first wrote it, and two more were added by him at a subsequent revision. One critic thinks that Fauconbridge and the Scotch lord were added later as a sort of 'gag' to set the audience laughing.

146–147. Portia closes this prose scene with a bit of rhymed doggerel, a 'tag' as it is called.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What do we learn from this scene about the conditions on which Portia's marriage depends?

Why does Portia say she is weary of the world?

Is her melancholy deep-rooted and constitutional, or merely a passing mood?

What particular phase of Portia's character is developed in this scene?

What national traits of the Englishman, the Frenchman, and the German are hit off in her comment on her suitors?

In what relation does Nerissa seem to stand toward Portia?

What passage connects this scene with the preceding one?

What announcement opens the way to a further development of the Casket Story?

Scene III.

This scene is more important to the action of the play than either of the preceding. Indeed the real action may be said to begin with this scene, the first two having been mainly devoted to exposition. Yet there is a certain amount of exposition in this scene as well; Shylock, the villain of the play, has to be introduced, and something has to be done to make the relentless cruelty which he displays later on credible and not altogether unnatural. This is done in the most effective fashion by contrasting him with Antonio, and by showing the grounds for the hatred, racial as well as personal, which he cherishes against the wealthy merchant. Shylock's personality is developed touch by touch with the most perfect art. All his speeches, especially in this introductory scene, should be read with great care, for besides their immediate purpose as a part of the stage dialogue, they serve a second, but not less important, end in revealing his strongly marked and complex character. Antonio's character is also further developed in this scene; we notice one trait, at least, that we would hardly have suspected from our previous knowledge. Bassanio plays in this scene a comparatively unimportant part, but he is guilty of a piece of selfishness which meets its just reward before the play is over.

Sir Henry Irving, the Shylock best known to the present generation of play-goers, represents the Jew as a man between fifty and sixty years of age, infirm enough to need the support of a stick, with an iron-gray wisp of beard. He wears in this scene a sober brown gaberdine, an Oriental shawl girdle, and a close-fitting black cap with a yellow line across it.

6. *May you stead me?;* Can you help me? Bassanio's triple question shows his impatience of Shylock's deliberate manner.

17–18. *his means are in supposition;* his fortune is uncertain because it is exposed to the perils of the sea.

18. *Tripolis;* not the well-known Barbary state, Tripoli, though

Antonio also traded with Barbary (III. ii. 272), but a sea-port in Syria, near the modern city of Beyrout. It was a port through which the commerce of Central Asia passed to Venice and western Europe.

19. *The Indies;* probably the East Indies, although as a matter of fact no Venetian galleys ever visited that part of the world. The discovery of the sea-passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope inflicted a severe blow on the prosperity of Venice, which formerly had been the Mediterranean carrier of goods coming from India by the overland route.

20. *The Rialto;* not the famous bridge of that name, but a piazza or open square at the end of that bridge on an island also called the Rialto, where merchants met to transact business and talk over the news.

21. *Mexico.* Venice never had any trade with Mexico. In Shakespeare's day this trade was monopolized by Spain, which imported every year vast quantities of gold and silver from Mexico. Shakespeare represents Antonio as engaging in this profitable trade, without in the least caring whether it were possible for him to do so or not.

35. *Nazarite.* To-day this word means a member of a peculiar Jewish sect who drank no wine and never cut their hair. To denote a citizen of Nazareth, we use the word 'Nazarene.' But the word 'Nazarene' appears for the first time in the Authorized Version of the Bible, 1613. In the earlier versions a man of Nazareth was always called a Nazarite. Shylock no doubt uses the word with an undertone of contempt. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" asked the scornful Pharisees, when they learned where Christ came from.

42. Note the change from prose to verse. Prose was good enough for the business-like conversation between Shylock and Bassanio, but when he had to express the Jew's feelings toward his enemy, Shakespeare felt the need of using verse. It is a general, though not an invariable, rule with Shakespeare that verse is used in scenes where strong emotions have to be portrayed.

a fawning publican. The publicans, or tax-collectors, under

the Roman government were bitterly hated by the Jews, as may be seen by many a passage in the New Testament. Shylock therefore applies the term to Antonio, the object of his special hatred. The adjective *fawning* is probably meant to characterize the warmth of Antonio's silent greeting of his friend. We may, perhaps, imagine Antonio taking Bassanio in his arms and kissing his cheeks in the demonstrative fashion of the Latin races, while Shylock, glancing contemptuously at them, pours out the bitterness of his heart in this speech.

44. *low simplicity;* base folly.

46. *the rate;* 15% *per annum* was a common charge at this time among the Venetian Jews.

47. *upon the hip;* a term used to denote a certain hold in wrestling.

52. *interest.* In Shakespeare's day this word had the same disreputable meaning that usury has now.

55. *by the near guess;* as near as I can guess.

58–59. *Tubal . . . will furnish me.* This is a well-known trick of usurers. In order to excuse their high rate of interest and their pertinacity in pressing for repayment, they pretend to be obliged to procure the money from a third party, on whom they lay the blame.

60. In order to scan this line *desire* must be pronounced as a word of three syllables, de-si-er.

It was Booth's custom when playing the part of Shylock to turn his back upon Antonio when the merchant came upon the stage. He remained in this position, even after Bassanio had appealed to him, until with the words, "Rest you fair, good signior," he suddenly turned and faced Antonio with a touch of surprise, as if just aware of his presence. He then took off his cap and addressed him obsequiously, but with a touch of irony in voice and expression.

63. *excess;* like *usance* and *usury* and *advantage* (l. 71), equivalent to interest.

64. *ripe wants;* wants which have reached such a stage that they must be supplied as ripe fruit must be plucked.

65. *he*, i.e., Shylock; Antonio has turned and is now addressing Bassanio. For a discussion of the textual variations see Textual Notes, p. 164.

72. The story of Jacob and the way in which he secured his wages from Laban, his uncle and father-in-law, is told in Genesis xxx.

74. *his wise mother*, Rebecca; see Genesis xxvii.

75. *possessor*, of the promised blessing which accompanied the birthright.

ay, he was the third. These words are spoken in a tone of exultation. Shylock fully approves of the deceitful trick by which Rebecca and Jacob secured a blessing from the blind old patriarch Isaac.

76. *And what of him?* Antonio interrupts rather impatiently. He is not particularly interested in Jacob.

85. *me*, the so-called ethical dative. It is a mere expletive whose only function in the sentence is to add emphasis to the statement.

90. *This was a way to thrive.* Shylock wholly approves the somewhat questionable device of Jacob, and cites it as an example where business shrewdness, such as he himself practices, was followed by God's blessing. Antonio in the following speech altogether dissents from this view; "Do you think this story was put in the Bible," he asks, "to justify usury?"

91. *gold and silver ewes and rams.* It was one of the commonplaces of those who preached against the taking of interest that since gold was lifeless, it could not bring forth more gold, and that therefore those who took interest were violating a law of nature.

99. *The devil can cite Scripture.* For an instance of this see Matthew iv. 6.

103. For the change in the received text see Textual Notes, p. 166; *falsehood* here has the meaning not so much of deceit as of dishonesty. Antonio is, of course, thinking of Shylock's attempt to excuse his usury by a quotation from the Bible.

110. *a patient shrug.* Here again it seems as if a passage

from the *Jew of Malta* were running in Shakespeare's head. In Act II. scene iii. of that play Barrabas says:

> "We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please:
> I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand,
> Heave up my shoulders when they call me dog,
> And duck as low as any barefoot friar."

131. Antonio is not at all moved to pity by this recital of Shylock's wrongs. So long as Shylock continues to take interest, he will continue to treat him like a dog.

138. *How you storm.* Shylock pretends to be greatly alarmed by Antonio's outburst.

146. *single bond;* a bond with your name alone upon it. This sounds very kind, since it saves Antonio the trouble and humiliation of hunting up another merchant to go on his bond to Shylock. But really it is a crafty trick on Shylock's part to get Antonio into his power. If another merchant had been on the bond, he would have had to pay the money in case Antonio failed.

149. *expressed in the condition;* stated in the formal bond.

162. *teaches.* This is not bad grammar. *Teaches* is an old plural form, which was still in use in the north of England in Shakespeare's day.

164. *break his day;* fail to pay the debt on the appointed day.

171. *for my love;* in regard to my loving offer (to lend money without interest) do not wrong me by your suspicions.

This speech completes the entrapping of Antonio. If after this he refuses to accept Shylock's loan on Shylock's own terms, he will seem to himself to be cherishing base suspicions of a man who is really trying to win his friendship. He quite forgets the penalty in thinking of the friendly nature of the offer.

177. *knave;* servant, with just a touch of its present meaning of 'rogue.'

179. *The Hebrew will turn Christian.* Antonio says this without a touch of irony; he thinks, as we shall see later on, that it

would be the best thing in the world for Shylock to turn Christian. Booth used to grin at this remark as at a pleasant joke; but when Antonio and Bassanio left the stage, he followed them with a look of hatred that showed the bitterness of the insult, as he regarded it, to his ancient faith

180. If Bassanio suspected the villain's mind beneath the fair terms, he ought never to have let Antonio sign the bond. But he needed the money badly and easily persuaded himself that Antonio ought to be the best judge as to whether there were any danger in the bond or not.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What trait of character is revealed in Shylock's conversation with Bassanio?

What reasons does Shylock allege for his hatred of Antonio?

Why does Shylock tell Antonio the long story about Jacob?

What state of mind is revealed by Shylock's recital of his injuries? (ll. 107–130.)

What effect does this speech have on Antonio?

How does Shylock persuade Antonio to sign the bond?

What does Bassanio think of the bond?

Why does he allow Antonio to sign it?

ACT II.

Now that Antonio has signed the bond a period of three months must elapse before it falls due. For the sake of dramatic effect Shakespeare wished to have this occur at the very time when Bassanio wins the hand of Portia. It was necessary, therefore, for him to devise some means to fill up the interval and so give the spectators the impression of the passage of a considerable space of time. How successfully he accomplished this a consideration of the second act will show. It is a busy, bustling act, of no less than nine scenes, some of them dealing with the Casket Story, the rest with the elopement of Lorenzo and Jessica. The Casket scenes go to show what has already

been hinted at, that the choice of the caskets is by no means a matter of pure chance, but rather dependent upon the character of the suitor. The story of Lorenzo and Jessica not only serves to fill up the time; but it also gives Shylock an additional motive for revenge; and so adds another humanizing touch to Shakespeare's portrait of his character.

Scene I.

The stage direction of the first Folio is so picturesque that it seems a pity not to keep it: *Enter Morochus, a tawnie Moor all in white, and two or three followers accordingly, with Portia, Nerissa and their traine. Flo.* (flourish) *Cornets.*

2. *shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun.* Morocco speaks of his dark complexion as if it were a suit bestowed upon him by the sun. *Livery* in Shakespeare's day meant something like 'uniform,' the special dress worn by the servants of a nobleman.

5. *Phœbus*, the sun-god.

6. *make incision;* cut the body, in order to drink a lady's health in blood, a wild fashion of lovers in Shakespeare's day.

7. *reddest.* Red blood was regarded as a sign of courage.

20. The apparent compliment contained in this speech becomes more than doubtful when one thinks of the sarcasms which Portia had heaped upon her previous suitors in the second scene of the play.

25. *The Sophy;* the Shah of Persia.

26. *Sultan Solyman.* Solyman the Magnificent, the Sultan of Turkey, was at war with Persia in 1535. Morocco, as a tributary prince, seems to have taken part in the campaign.

32. *Hercules and Lichas.* Hercules, one of the most famous heroes of Grecian mythology, was remarkable for his enormous strength. Lichas was an attendant of his, here called, in Elizabethan fashion, his page.

35. *Alcides;* another name for Hercules.

42. *be advis'd;* listen to my advice, do not be rash in choosing.

43. *Nor will not.* The double negative is used for emphasis. What is it that Morocco declares he will not do?

44. *The temple;* where Morocco must take the oath referred to in l. 40.

46. *blest*, used here as a superlative.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What do we learn of Morocco's character in this scene?

What is Portia's attitude toward him?

Is Portia's warning (ll. 38–42) meant to discourage him from choosing?

Scene II.

This is a low-comedy scene introduced by way of change. The audience in Shakespeare's day insisted on having a clown or fool in each play to amuse them with songs and dances and absurd speeches. In some of Shakespeare's plays a professional fool, or jester, plays this part; in others he introduces, as here, a servant, or man of the people, whose ridiculous attempts to imitate the manners and language of his betters set the spectators laughing. The old stage direction for this scene reads: "*The Clowne alone.*" The word "clown" in Shakespeare's day was often used to designate a country-fellow, such as Launcelot proves to be.

1. *will serve.* There is a sort of mock battle between Launcelot's conscience, which bids him keep his engagement and go on serving the Jew, and the devil, who tempts him to run away. Launcelot is strongly inclined to run, and he here expresses the hope that his conscience will finally yield and permit him to go.

4. *Gobbo*, an Italian word meaning 'hunchback.' A stone figure called the Gobbo di Rialto stood in the piazza in Venice where the merchants met.

18. *smack, grow to, had a kind of taste.* These phrases all mean about the same thing, namely, that Father Gobbo was not quite so honest as he might have been. He had a little touch of trickiness. "*Grow to*" is said to be a household phrase applied to milk when it sticks to the bottom of the pan and burns.

23. *Counsel well.* See Textual Notes, p. 168.

29. *incarnation;* a mistake, of course, for 'incarnate.' Launcelot is fond of using bigger words than he can manage and often confuses them. He seems to have inherited this trick from his father; see Gobbo's mistakes in ll. 133 and 152.

37. *sand-blind*, half-blind. Launcelot invents a third grade of blindness midway between sand-blind and stone-blind, which he calls "high-gravel-blind."

38–39. *try confusions with him;* play a trick on him.

47. *Be God's sonties;* By God's little saints. See Glossary under *Sonties*.

49. *cater-cousins;* a term formerly applied to persons on terms of 'cousin-ship,' i.e., intimate friendship, or familiarity, with each other. It did not denote any blood relationship.

51. *raise the waters;* raise a storm, kick up the dust.

53. *master;* a title applied at that time only to esquires and other gentlemen. Old Gobbo knows better than to call his son "*Master* Launcelot."

55. *well to live;* likely to live long, in good health.

56. *a';* for *he*, as often in familiar dialogue in Shakespeare.

58. *Launcelot, sir;* that is, plain Launcelot, without any title of master.

59. *ergo, old man;* therefore, because he is the friend of one whom you call "your worship," he is Master Launcelot.

63. *ergo, Master Launcelot.* In the preceding speech old Gobbo has unconsciously given his son the desired title by calling him "your mastership." "Ergo, Master Launcelot," says the youth, and drops the joke to "try confusions" with his father in another fashion.

66. *The Sisters Three;* the three Fates.

82. *give me your blessing.* With these words Launcelot kneels before his father, but with his back toward him.

98. *Lord worshipped might he be;* the Lord be praised. The old man is so glad to get his son back from the gates of death that he doesn't scold him for the joke.

99. *What a beard.* The sand-blind Gobbo touches Launcelot's long hair and mistakes it for a beard.

110. *have set up my rest;* made up my mind. The term seems to be taken from a game of cards and means to make an extra bet on a hand.

115. *me;* another instance of the ethical dative, meaning, perhaps, *for me.*

122. *Supper . . . five of the clock.* Gentlemen dined about noon and took supper between five and six in Shakespeare's time.

132. Instead of finishing his speech Launcelot seizes his father and whirls him up to Bassanio to speak for him; but before the old man has well started, Launcelot whirls him round again. He keeps this up till Bassanio stops his foolery and says "One speak for both."

142. *frutify.* Launcelot means *certify.*

144. *a dish of doves;* a mess of pigeons, a very appropriate present for an Italian countryman to make to his son's master.

158. *The old proverb;* "God's grace is gear (wealth) enough."

167. *table;* the palm of his hand in which his fortune may be read. No man in Italy, he thinks, has a better table, for this hand of his offers to swear on the Bible that he will have good luck. The sentence is unfinished; perhaps some conclusion like "I'll be hanged" is to be understood.

169. *a simple line of life.* The line surrounding the ball of the thumb is known in palmistry as the line of life. *Simple* means *poor;* used here, of course, ironically as below in l. 172.

170. *fifteen wives.* Certain lines running down from the ball of the thumb to the line of life are supposed in palmistry to show how many times the owner of the hand will be married. Launcelot doesn't seem very good at mental arithmetic; if he is to marry eleven widows and nine maids, the total of his future spouses is something more than fifteen.

173–174. *to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed;* a slang phrase signifying the risks of matrimony.

176. *for this gear;* for this business, for bringing me such good luck.

202. *hood mine eyes.* In Shakespeare's day men wore their

hats at table. They took them off, however, while grace was being said, and those who were, or pretended to be, devout buried their faces in them. This is what Gratiano means by *hood mine eyes.*

205. *one well studied in a sad ostent;* one who had made a study of sober behavior.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What part does Launcelot play in the drama?

How does his passage from Shylock's service into Bassanio's help to connect the various stories of the play?

What trait in Bassanio's character is shown in his conversation with Gratiano?

Scene III.

This short scene serves the double purpose of giving us a glimpse of Shylock's home life and of starting the elopement story. Jessica, the Jew's pretty daughter, is so unhappy with her father that she says "Our house is hell," and eagerly embraces the opportunity offered by Launcelot's departure to send a letter to her Christian lover bidding him come and take her away.

3. *some taste*, a little.

10. *Tears exhibit my tongue.* Unless Launcelot is making one of his usual mistakes and uses *exhibit* for *prohibit*, the phrase must mean "my tears show the sorrow which my tongue cannot speak."

12. *get thee;* for a wife.

20. *this strife;* between her duty to her father and her love for Lorenzo.

Scene IV.

This scene continues the elopement story and introduces the gay company of young gentlemen surrounding Jessica's lover. It is not unnatural that she should prefer this society to the tediousness of her father's house, a glimpse of which is given in the next scenes. The mention of Shylock's invitation to supper

with Bassanio shows that Lorenzo will have a good chance to carry off Jessica, and at the same time serves to sharpen Shylock's anger against Antonio and Bassanio, whom he cannot help regarding as accomplices in the elopement.

2. *Disguise us.* Lorenzo and his friends are planning to present a masque at Bassanio's farewell supper. A masque was a sort of amateur performance, half-ballet, half-play, accompanied by vocal and instrumental music. It was in special favor at Venice.

5. *spoke us.* *Spoke* means *bespoke; us* is the dative of interest and means *for ourselves.* Torch-bearers usually attended a party of masquers through the streets and lighted up their dance in the house where they performed.

18. *sup to-night with my new master.* Since Shylock's friendly loan he and the Christians are on such good terms that Bassanio renews his invitation of I. iii., and this time Shylock accepts it.

20. *take this.* Lorenzo gives Launcelot a tip.

27. *some hour;* about an hour.

36. *cross her foot;* cross her trail and so get upon her track.

37. *she*, Misfortune personified.

38. *she*, Jessica.
faithless, infidel.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

Why is a party of masquers introduced here?

What is Shakespeare's design in having Shylock invited to Bassanio's farewell supper?

Why should Bassanio ask him?

Which of the lovers seems to have planned the elopement, and what trait of character does this reveal?

Scene V.

This scene carries on the elopement story and further develops Shylock's character by showing how he treats his daughter.

3. *gormandise.* Compare Launcelot's view as to the amount of food he got in Shylock's service. (II. ii. 113–114.)

14. *go in hate;* another of the little touches by which Shylock's deeply rooted hatred of the Christians is revealed. In the first act he had refused Bassanio's invitation to dine, but now that his acceptance will help the prodigal Christian waste his borrowed money he is quite willing to "smell pork."

16. *loath to go.* This vague foreboding of evil is not uncommon in Shakespeare's plays. When the audience, which knows what is coming, hears such an expression as this, it sympathizes almost involuntarily with the speaker over whose head the trouble is impending.

17. *toward my rest;* against my peace of mind.

18. *money-bags.* It is an old superstition that to dream of money means bad luck.

20. *reproach;* another of Launcelot's mistakes. What word does he mean?

25. *Black Monday;* the Monday after Easter. It took this name from a terrible day of storm and cold in which many men in an English army perished under the walls of Paris.

26. *Ash-Wednesday;* the first day of Lent. It must have been a strange year in which Black Monday fell out on Ash-Wednesday; Launcelot of course is talking nonsense, like a professional fool.

30. *wry-necked fife;* a flute with a twisted mouth-piece.

33. *varnish'd faces;* the painted, or masked, faces of the masqueraders.

36. *Jacob's staff;* the staff with which Jacob, Shylock's great ancestor, passed over Jordan on his way to Laban, his uncle.

43. *a Jewës eye.* An old phrase "worth a Jew's eye" was used in Shakespeare's day to denote something very precious. The phrase may, perhaps, date from the times when Jews were tortured to force them to surrender their wealth. As Launcelot uses the phrase, it has, besides this meaning, the sense of "worth a Jew's looking at." By 'Jew' he means Jessica; Shakespeare never uses the word 'Jewess.' See Textual Notes, p. 172.

44. *Hagar's offspring.* The Ishmaelites, descended from Hagar, Abraham's concubine, were despised by the Jews, who were the descendants of Abraham's legitimate son, Isaac.

47. *profit;* either profitable employment, or improvement as a servant.

50–51. *that . . . his = whose;* this old English construction is not infrequent in Shakespeare.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What trait of Shylock's character is shown in his conversation with Launcelot?

Why does Shylock go to Bassanio's supper?

What trait of Shylock's character is shown in his conversation with Jessica?

Why did he forbid her to look at the masqueraders in the streets?

Why does he tell her he may return at once?

Scene VI.

This scene closes the sequence devoted to the elopement story. Jessica's deliberate plunder of her father's treasure chest fills him with a fiercer passion for revenge upon her Christian friends than her mere elopement could have done, and so prepares us for Shylock's great outburst of passion when he learns of her act. The report, at the very close of the scene, of Bassanio's intention to start at once for Belmont shifts the interest from the elopement of Jessica to the wooing of Portia, and thus links this scene with the next following.

2. An Alexandrine. The pause due to the change of speakers falls exactly in the middle of the line.

5. *pigeons;* the doves which were supposed to draw the chariot of Venus. These birds, according to Salarino, so far partook of the nature of their mistress, a proverbially fickle goddess, that they were far readier to be on with a new love than remain true to the old. It seems as if the speaker were expressing a rather uncomplimentary doubt as to whether Lorenzo would keep faith with Jessica.

7. *obliged faith;* faith bound by a promise or oath.

10–12. *untread . . . his tedious measures.* The allusion seems to be to a horse trained to perform a complex series of paces and then to go back over them in reverse order.

17. *the prodigal.* The reference is, of course, to the prodigal son of Christ's parable.

24. What is wanting to complete the regular metre in this line?

32. "God knows it, and so do you."

34. "I'm glad it is so dark that you cannot see me."

35. *my exchange;* referring, of course, to the change of clothes that she has made.

42. *too too light.* There is a play on the word *light*, which in Shakespeare's time meant 'frivolous' or 'wanton,' as well as 'bright.'

43. *office of discovery;* the business (office) of a torch-bearer is to hold a light by which things are revealed (discovered).

44. *should be obscured;* ought to be hidden.

51. *by my hood;* probably a gay oath by the hood of the costume he was then wearing.

a Gentile. There is probably a play here on the words 'Gentile' and 'gentle,' the latter of which had the meaning of 'well-born.'

At the close of this scene it has been Sir Henry Irving's practice, when playing the part of Shylock, to come again upon the stage and knock at the door of his empty house. When he gets no answer he stares up at the dark windows with a wild look of mingled fear and wrath before he rushes in. The dumb-show is very effective, but is, of course, unwarranted by Shakespeare's text, and is one of the many modern innovations to increase the importance of Shylock's part in the play.

Questions on the Scene.

What connection has Gratiano's speech (ll. 8–19) with the dramatic situation?

Is there any justification for Jessica's appropriation of her father's gold and jewels?

Would an Elizabethan audience consider this act a crime?

What dramatic purpose is served by the mention of Bassanio's hasty departure for Belmont?

Scene VII.

The caskets on which Portia's destiny depends appear for the first time in this scene. We learn that each of them bears an inscription which may either guide or mislead a suitor, and that one of them contains Portia's picture as a sign that the right choice has been made. Morocco, the first of Portia's lovers to venture upon the choice, is a type of the men who cannot see below the surface, but are guided wholly by appearances. He, therefore, fails to win the lady, as her father had wished and expected such suitors to fail.

4. *who.* Our present discrimination between *who* and *which* was unknown in Shakespeare's time.

5. The inscriptions on the caskets are in Alexandrines to distinguish them from the pentameter of the dialogue.

40. *shrine;* here, as elsewhere in Shakespeare, equivalent to 'image.'

41. *Hyrcanian;* Hyrcania was a wild district in Central Asia, abounding in tigers.

44. *whose ambitious head;* whose swelling waves.

50–51. *It were too gross to rib her cerecloth*; it (lead) would be too common a metal to enclose her shroud.

53. *ten times undervalued.* Silver in 1600 stood to gold in about the ratio of 10 to 1.

56. *a coin.* A gold coin bearing the figure of the archangel Michael trampling on the dragon was in common circulation in Shakespeare's day and was generally called an 'angel.'

58. *an angel in a golden bed;* Portia's picture, which Morocco imagines to be contained in the golden casket.

63. *a carrion Death;* the skull of a dead man.

65–73. The inscription on the scroll is written in trochaic tetrameter, that is in lines of four feet in each of which the accent falls on the first syllable. The unaccented syllable of the last foot of each line is missing.

67–68. "Many a man has lost his life only to look upon a deceitful show, like the outside of the golden casket."

75. *farewell heat and welcome frost;* an inversion of an old saying, "farewell frost," used on the departure of any unwelcome thing or person.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What additional information about the caskets do we get in this scene?

Why did Morocco choose the golden casket?

How does Morocco take his bad luck?

Putting this scene and the first scene of the act together what may we learn of Morocco's character and of the nature of his love for Portia? Would he have been a fit match for her?

Scene VIII.

This important scene carries us back to Venice, where we learn of Shylock's wild outburst on his discovery of Jessica's flight with his gold and jewels. It may seem strange that Shakespeare omitted the strong dramatic effect which would have been attained by bringing Shylock himself upon the stage at the moment of this discovery. Perhaps he thought that such a scene would be too tragic for a comedy like this.

The fact that the Duke of Venice came in person with Shylock to search Bassanio's ship for the eloping couple shows that however much Jews were despised at Venice, they were not denied any of their legal rights by the officials of the state. It is plain, therefore, that if Shylock comes to sue for the forfeiture of his bond, he will receive full justice and not be driven out of court simply because he is a Jew.

The news of the loss of a Venetian vessel in the English Channel leads us to anticipate Antonio's losses and the consequent forfeiture of his bond, while the description of his tender parting with Bassanio awakens our sympathy for the kind-hearted man over whose head the storm of Shylock's vengeance is about to break.

4. *the villain Jew.* So far, at least, Shylock has not done anything villainous. The epithet shows the way in which the Jew as a Jew was regarded by the Venetian gentlemen.

12. *passion*, passionate outburst.

16. *my Christian ducats;* a strange phrase for Shylock to use of his dearly loved money. Probably he is lamenting the fact that his ducats have passed into the hands of a Christian. Shylock's words were, no doubt, suggested by a passage in the *Jew of Malta* (Act II, scene i), where Barrabas, on recovering, by the aid of his daughter, some money which he had lost, exclaims:

> "O my girl,
> My gold, my fortune, my felicity
> . . . . . .
> O girl! O gold! O beauty! O my bliss!"

19. *double ducats;* presumably coins worth two ducats, as the double eagle is worth two eagles.

29. *miscarried*, a word of four syllables.

33. *You were*, pronounced like one word. *You*, the apparent subject, is really a dative; the subject is 'it,' understood.

39. *slubber;* slur over, spoil by hurrying.

42. *mind of love;* your mind, which should be entirely devoted to love.

44–45. "such fair manifestations of love as shall be proper for you as a suitor."

52. *his embraced heaviness;* the melancholy which he seems to cultivate. *Embraced* is a word of three syllables.

Questions on the Scene.

What is shown by the fact that the Duke of Venice came in person to search Bassanio's ship with Shylock?

Why did Shakespeare not bring Shylock himself upon the stage to utter his outburst of passion?

Why is the account of Antonio's parting with Bassanio introduced in this scene?

What does this report show as to Antonio's affection for Bassanio?

Scene IX.

This scene exhibits a second choice of the caskets and a second failure. But it is by no means a mere repetition of the seventh scene of this act. Morocco chose thoughtlessly without regard for anything but outward appearances; Arragon, on the other hand, deliberately argues himself into a wrong choice. Yet here, as in the seventh scene, the choice is wholly determined by the character of the chooser; and once more the wisdom of Portia's father is justified by the result.

In the dramatic construction of the play this scene serves two purposes. First, it adds a pleasing symmetry to the Casket Story. Every one feels that the story is more complete and harmonious when of the three caskets the two wrong ones are first chosen and the right choice is made last. If this scene were omitted and Bassanio made his choice immediately after Morocco, we should be left wondering what was in the silver casket.

Again, this scene adds to the impression that a considerable period of time is passing between the day on which Antonio borrows the money of Shylock and that on which Bassanio wins the hand of Portia.

1. *draw the curtain;* draw open the curtain behind which the caskets are hidden.

9–16. The most important of these three conditions has already been made known to us (II. i. 40–42). It is quite in keeping with the solemn formality of Arragon's character that before making his choice he should rehearse the conditions under which it is made.

13. *marriage*, a word of three syllables.

19. *addressed me;* prepared myself.
Fortune, good luck.

22. Note the scornful fashion in which Arragon passes over the leaden casket.

26. *by the fool multitude;* for the foolish common herd of men.

28. How is this line to be scanned?

29. *in the weather;* in the open air, exposed to the weather.

30. *in the force and road of casualty;* exposed to the shock, in the very way of accidents.

44. *cover;* wear hats like great men, instead of standing bare-headed as they now do in the presence of their masters.

46–49. "How much meanness—*peasantry* has something of the original meaning of 'villainy,' a quality suitable only to low-born men—would be separated from that which is truly honorable, and how much good, now lost in the chaff and the rubbish heap of the times, would be picked up to be burnished anew." The metaphor is hopelessly mixed, but none the less striking.

51. *assume desert;* take it for granted that I deserve Portia. Note the Alexandrine, broken by a pause as Arragon turns to ask for the key.

53. This 'aside' is spoken while Arragon stands in dumb amazement contemplating the contents of the casket.

58. Arragon repeats the inscription on the casket to justify the choice which has proved so unfortunate. He will not admit that he does not deserve Portia.

61–62. There has been a good deal of dispute over the exact meaning of these lines. I take them as equivalent to a formal refusal on Portia's part to discuss the question of Arragon's deserts. "I seem to have offended you," she says, "and so I cannot act as judge in this case." Others think the words refer to Arragon: "You have offended, by making the wrong choice, and so cannot be a good judge as to whether you have received your deserts or not." But this implied rebuke seems hardly courteous enough for Portia.

63. The metre of this scroll corresponds to that of the scroll in the golden casket. In this line *fire* and *tried* are pronounced like words of two syllables.

68. *I wis;* a corruption of an old adverb, 'ywis,' meaning 'certainly.' But Shakespeare probably thought of it as the present tense of the verb 'to wit,' 'to know.'

73. Arragon seems to have caught the infection of the jingling scroll and bids farewell to Portia in a similar metre.

80. *deliberate fools;* a perfect characterization of Arragon, which shows Portia's quick insight into the characters of men.

84. *draw the curtain;* draw the curtain to hide the caskets. The line lacks a syllable.

85. *my lord.* This is said laughingly. Portia is so delighted to be free of Arragon that she cracks a mild joke with the servant.

90. *courteous breath;* polite speeches.

98. *high-day wit;* high-flown rhetoric, suitable rather to an oration on a holiday than to a plain message.

100. Nerissa's speech may be taken as expressing the unspoken wish of Portia herself.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What additional information do we get from this scene as to the conditions under which the choice of the caskets was made?

Why did Arragon choose the silver casket?

How does he take his misfortune?

Why would he have been an unsuitable husband for Portia?

What two dramatic purposes are served by this scene?

ACT III.

The light comedy of Act II passes in this act into serious drama, in one scene closely approaching the tragic. The Bond and Casket stories in alternate scenes occupy the whole act and are more closely interwoven than before by Portia's resolve to undertake the deliverance of Antonio.

The first scene, written in prose, probably for the sake of the realistic impression to be conveyed, is one of the most important of the drama. Not only does it announce Antonio's bankruptcy and Shylock's determination to exact the pound of flesh, but it reveals to the full the fierce and revengeful, yet by no means unnatural, character of the Jew. The rapid alternations of feeling and the mixture of motives which he

displays in this scene add immensely to our conception of him not as a mere stage villain, but as a living, breathing man.

Scene I.

2. *lives unchecked;* remains uncontradicted.

4. *the narrow seas;* the English Channel.

the Goodwins; the Goodwin sands, near the mouth of the Thames. Salarino's doubt as to the name of a spot known to every Londoner helps to bring out the fact that the action is taking place in Venice.

7. *my gossip Report. Report*, that is 'Rumor,' is here personified as a *gossip*, that is a chattering old woman.

12. *without any slips of prolixity;* without indulging in a long-winded narration.

46. a *bad match;* bad bargain.

47. *a prodigal.* Antonio's previous liberality to his friends seems to Shylock a wanton wasting of his fortune.

51–52. *for a Christian courtesy;* out of pure Christian charity, without interest; cf. I. i. 44–45.

let him look to his bond. This is the first intimation on Shylock's part that his "merry jest" is to be turned to deadly earnest. Notice how the grim determination of his character is brought out by the repetition of this phrase.

60–61. *I am a Jew.* As a matter of fact the main reason for Antonio's ill-treatment of Shylock was his hatred of him as a usurer, rather than as a Jew. But the two were practically identical at that time, and Shylock readily transfers the hatred which Antonio feels for his calling to the account of racial prejudice. This whole speech of Shylock's deserves the most careful study. It is hardly, perhaps, "the most eloquent plea that the human voice has ever dared to utter for a despised race," as an enthusiastic Frenchman has called it; but it is a superb piece of self-justification. Shylock takes his stand on the old Hebrew principle of retaliation; he will do as he has been done by. And against the Christians who first wronged him and then talked to him of mercy and forgiveness his plea is

unanswerable. Salanio and Salarino are fairly driven from their guns and abandon the field to Shylock and his tribesman, Tubal.

77–78. This message confirms Shylock's statement (ll. 47–48) that Antonio since his losses hardly dares to show his head in public.

83. *Genoa*, the great commercial rival of Venice in the carrying trade of the East Jessica seems to have fled there direct from Venice; and Tubal, who appears to be a sort of hanger-on of Shylock's, must have been commissioned to get news of her.

88. *Frankfort;* a German city famous among other things for its extended trade and for its large Jewish quarter.

92–94. The apologists for Shylock's character take great pains to explain away these lines. There can be no doubt that Shakespeare meant them to show how little Shylock really cared for his daughter. It is not so much the loss of her as the fact of her flight with a Christian and, above all, the theft of the ducats and the precious, precious jewels that stirs her father's wrath.

107. *I thank God.* This second loss of Antonio's completes his ruin and delivers him into Shylock's hands.

112. *here? in Genoa?* See Textual Notes, p. 175. Shylock is asking Tubal where he spoke with the sailors; was it here in Venice, or in Genoa, where he first heard the news?

113. Tubal does not answer the question, but gives Shylock a piece of bad news to balance the good. Throughout the scene Tubal seems to take a malicious pleasure in playing upon Shylock's feelings. The alternations of wrath and exultation in Shylock are, of course, immensely effective upon the stage.

126. *turquoise.* This stone was thought in Shakespeare's day to have several magical qualities. Among others it paled and lost color if the affection of the giver waned. It was therefore a very suitable gift for Leah, Shylock's dead wife, to give him in the days of their courtship. The fact that Jessica could barter this ring for a pet monkey shows how completely she had broken with her home.

131. *an officer;* a bailiff to arrest Antonio for debt.

a fortnight before. This phrase shows that a period of something over two weeks has yet to elapse before the bond falls due.

133–134. The defenders of Shylock who justify his hatred of Antonio by representing him as the avenger of his persecuted race must have overlooked this frank statement of one motive at least, if not the chief motive, for his determination to exact the penalty.

135. *synagogue.* It was quite customary at this time to transact business in the church of St. Paul's at London. Shakespeare may be transferring this English custom to Venice, or he may mean Shylock to visit the synagogue in order to register the vow of vengeance to which he afterwards refers in IV. i. 228.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What news of Antonio's losses do we get in this scene?

What dramatic purpose is effected by making Salarino and Salanio jeer Shylock about his daughter's flight?

What reason does Shylock give Salarino and Salanio for his determination to exact the penalty from Antonio?

What reason does he give Tubal?

Does one of these reasons exclude the other?

What effect does the news of Jessica's prodigality have on Shylock?

What humanizing touch is added to Shylock's character by his mention of Leah's ring?

What indication of the time of this scene occurs in Shylock's last speech?

Scene II.

This scene, occurring as it does in the exact centre of the play, is dramatically its most important scene. The Casket Story is brought to a happy conclusion by Bassanio's successful choice. Portia's resolve to rescue Antonio at any cost from Shylock involves her in the Bond Story, and so combines more closely

than before the two main plots. The appearance of Lorenzo and Jessica at Belmont brings the chief figures of the under-plot into connection with the actors in the Casket Story. Lastly, Portia's gift of her ring to Bassanio prepares the way for the Ring Episode of the last act. In short, all the threads of the drama are in this scene caught up and woven together about the central and dominating figure of Portia. Her character, hitherto revealed mainly in its lighter and more humorous aspects, rises to the perfection of womanly sweetness and dignity in her confession of love, her self-surrender, and her instant sympathy with Bassanio's trouble. His character also is admirably developed by contrast with the preceding suitors, and both as a lover and as a friend he appears to better advantage than anywhere else in the play. Altogether the scene is one which deserves and will repay special study and consideration.

2. *in choosing wrong;* if you make the wrong choice.

3. An Alexandrine, of which there are several in this scene.

7. *lest you should not understand me well.* Portia would like to detain Bassanio in Belmont a month or two—note how the time has expanded from the "day or two" of l. 1—that he may come to understand her well, that is, know her and so love her better. Yet, being a maiden, she has no tongue to utter her love, but can only feel it. The whole speech is a charming medley of contradictions through which Portia's true love for Bassanio shines clearer and clearer until it comes to full expression in the words, "and so, all yours." She is, naturally enough, torn between her love for Bassanio and her fear of losing him at once, according to the conditions, in case he makes the wrong choice.

14. *beshrew your eyes.* This, of course, is said playfully.

16. *the other half yours.* This slip of the tongue betrays Portia's real feeling and encourages her to full confession in the following lines.

18. *yours;* pronounced like a word of two syllables, as in the first case of its use in l. 20.

19. *puts;* an old plural form of the verb.

20–21. "If it turn out that you are divided from me by the ill-fortune of the lottery, let fortune be condemned for it; but let not me be condemned for perjury in breaking my oath and teaching you to choose aright."

24. *to stay you from election;* to keep you from choosing.

24–25. Bassanio's impatience to know his fate is as characteristic of the male lover as the sweet reluctance of Portia is of the woman.

26. *the rack.* Torture, although not countenanced by the laws of England, was, nevertheless, occasionally employed in Shakespeare's day to wring a confession from men accused of treason.

29. *fear the enjoying;* fear that I shall not enjoy.

41. Portia knows that love will teach Bassanio the secret of the caskets, and yet she cannot help fearing that he may fail.

44. *swan-like end;* the words refer to the old belief that the swan sang for the only time in its life, just before it died.

49. *the flourish.* A flourish, or blast, of trumpets marks the moment in the ceremony of an English coronation when the sovereign puts on the crown.

51. *dulcet sounds in break of day;* an allusion to the pretty old custom of waking a bridegroom on his wedding morn by music beneath his window.

55. *Alcides*, Hercules. According to a story told by Shakespeare's favorite Latin poet, Ovid, Hercules once came to Troy and found Hesione, the virgin daughter of the Trojan king, exposed to be devoured by a sea-monster. He promised to rescue her if the king would give him some famous horses which he had in his stable. Portia compares Bassanio's *presence*, that is his whole manner and appearance, to that of Hercules, but Bassanio has *much more love*, since it was a wish to possess the horses, not love for Hesione, that impelled the Grecian hero to rescue the maiden.

57. *I stand for sacrifice;* I represent the sacrifice, i. e., Hesione.

58. *the Dardanian wives*; the Trojan women.

59. *bleared visages*; tear-stained faces.

63. This song has been pronounced a plain hint to Bassanio which casket to choose; but only those who are wise after the event can see in it the slightest infraction of Portia's oath not to disclose the secret. At most the song starts in Bassanio's mind a train of thought which eventually issues in the right choice. Had it been sung to Morocco or Arragon, it would in no way have altered their decisions.

fancy; not so much love, though it is sometimes used by Shakespeare in this sense, as a passing fancy, which, as the song says, comes neither from the heart nor from the head, but from a mere sight of the object that inspires it, and which passes away when the eyes lose sight of the object.

73. This speech of Bassanio's should be carefully studied. It not only solves the riddle of the caskets, but discloses his own genuine and thoughtful character. It was for such a man, who could tell the false from the true and discover the treasure hidden beneath a repulsive exterior, that Portia's wise father intended his daughter. The whole speech is what might be called a variation on the simple theme,—appearances are deceitful.

84. *stairs of sand;* which fall away and betray the feet that trust to them.

85. *the beards of Hercules.* Beards in Shakespeare's day were particularly affected by soldiers. In *As You Like It*, he speaks of the soldier as being "bearded like the pard."

86. *livers white as milk.* See note on I. i. 81.

91. *lightest;* for the play on words see note on II. vi. 42.

92. *crisped snaky golden locks.* Queen Elizabeth's auburn hair set the fashion in Shakespeare's time. Ladies whose dark locks put them out of the fashion often covered their heads with a blonde wig made of the hair of some dead woman. Shakespeare's native honesty was greatly offended by this practice and he took more than one opportunity to inveigh against it. In one of his sonnets he speaks of the good old times—

Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away;

To live a second life on second head;
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay.

93. *makes.* The relative in Shakespeare frequently takes a singular verb, even when its antecedent is plural; *makes*, however, may be considered as an old plural form.

99. The dark complexion of an Indian was the very opposite of the blonde beauty in favor in Shakespeare's England. See the discussion of this passage in the Textual Notes, p. 178.

beauty; here used as synonymous with *ornament* in l. 74 and equivalent to the *outward shows* of l. 73.

102. *Midas.* According to Grecian legend King Midas was very greedy of gain. A god gave him the gift of turning whatever he touched into gold. To his horror he found that even his food became gold as it touched his lips.

103. *pale and common drudge;* silver, so called because of its use in the common coins that pass from hand to hand.

106. *plainness;* blunt frankness, referring to the inscription on the leaden casket (see Textual Notes, p. 182). The very inscription which had repelled the thoughtless Morocco and the self-conceited Arragon attracts Bassanio.

108. Note how Portia in her joy at Bassanio's choice breaks out into rhyme.

112. *in measure rain;* rain down joy moderately, not in an overwhelming torrent. See Textual Notes, p. 183.

scant this excess; limit this excess of joy.

114. A syllable is wanting to make this line complete. But as there is a pause between its two halves corresponding to the change of speakers, the defect is not noticed on the stage. And it must be remembered that Shakespeare's verse was meant to be heard, not read.

117. *Or whether;* or.

127. *this shadow;* the portrait, which, though it surpasses all Bassanio's praise, yet is but a faint shadow of Portia's beauty.

132. *chance as fair;* may you always have such good fortune. *Chance* is a verb.

140. *by note;* according to the direction of the scroll. Bassanio, like Portia, utters his joy in rhyme.

149. This beautiful speech of Portia's is cast in blank verse as being too weighty and serious for the rhyme in which she expressed her first outburst of joy.

154. An Alexandrine. See Textual Notes, p. 184.

155. *in your account;* in your estimation.

158. *sum of—something.* See Textual Notes, p. 184. Portia hesitates for a word with which to describe herself as she really is, and does not find it; "all I am," she says, "is something which you may sum up (*term in gross*) by calling an unlessoned girl." Portia's modesty in thus undervaluing herself before her lover is one of her most winning traits.

161. A syllable is wanting in this line. Dr. Furness suggests that the word 'in' which appears in some old editions before *this* was dropped out by the printers. The pause in the middle of the verse, however, makes up for the missing syllable.

163. *Happiest of all is;* the happiest thing of all is. See Textual Notes, p. 184.

191. *none from me;* nothing away from me, nothing that I shall lose by.

220. *Salerio.* A number of modern editors consider this a misprint for Salanio, arguing that Shakespeare would not introduce a new and unimportant character so late in the play. But Shakespeare does exactly this more than once in his dramas. There seems no reason for changing the old reading. See Textual Notes, p. 186.

222. *the youth of my new interest here;* my newly acquired position as Portia's prospective husband.

230. Salerio probably pressed Lorenzo and Jessica to come with him to Belmont that they might bear further testimony to the relentless determination of Shylock to exact the penalty.

236. *nor well, unless in mind.* Antonio's condition (*estate*) is such that he cannot be quite well, unless his *mind*, that is, his patience and fortitude of mind, supports him.

238. *yon stranger;* Jessica. By this little stage-device Jessica is taken away from the centre of the stage and thus the necessity of introducing her and of telling her story to Portia is obviated. This clears the way for the far more important business of Antonio's letter.

240. *royal merchant;* a fit epithet for one of the merchant princes of Venice. Some of them actually ruled as sovereign princes in islands of the Greek Archipelago. One of the leading business men of London in Shakespeare's day, Sir Thomas Gresham, was often called "the royal merchant."

242. *the Jasons.* Note how Gratiano uses the same simile as Bassanio in I. i. 172.

247–8. *turn so much the constitution of any constant man;* affect so strongly any well-balanced man.

250. The last foot of this line has two extra syllables, which are only lightly pronounced in reading.

279. *impeach the freedom of the state;* call in question, or deny the freedom of Venice. One of the special characteristics of the republic of Venice was the freedom it granted to aliens to pursue their business in the city and to press their suits in its courts. Shylock insists that unless he obtains his bond, this freedom is a mere pretense.

294. *unwearied;* a superlative; 'most,' is understood from the word *best* preceding *condition'd.*

300. *deface the bond;* cancel the bond.

303. A syllable is wanting in this line. Some early texts have the word 'my' before *Bassanio's;* but *through* was probably pronounced 'thorough,' as it is sometimes spelled in Shakespeare.

313. *a merry cheer;* a pleasant face.

314. *since you are dear-bought.* Portia tries to lighten the gravity of the situation by pretending that the money she must pay to free Antonio is really the price she pays for a husband, and since he is *dear-bought* she will love him dearly. Notice how the jest fades away when she hears the pathetic letter of Antonio.

325–8. The artificial character of this speech—notice the

alternation of the rhymes—is one of the few signs of early workmanship that remain in this play. Shakespeare was rather addicted to these rhyming quatrains in his early work, but gradually ceased to use them.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

Why does Portia wish Bassanio to delay a while before trying his fortune with the caskets?

What phrases in her first speech show her affection for him?

How does she try to conceal it?

Did Portia tell the other suitors that she knew the secret of the caskets?

What is shown by her mention of this fact to Bassanio?

Why does Bassanio insist on choosing at once?

What is the underlying meaning of the song?

Does it tell Bassanio which casket to choose?

What is the leading thought of Bassanio's speech, ll. 73–107?

Why does he choose the leaden casket?

What qualities of head and heart are revealed in Portia's speech, ll. 149–174?

What feeling is shown in Bassanio's reply to this speech?

What new elements appear in the scene at l. 221?

What trait of character appears in Portia's speech ll. 244–251?

What creditable incident of Bassanio's courtship is revealed in his speech, ll. 251–272?

What does Jessica say as to Shylock's feeling toward Antonio?

What does this show as to the time of Shylock's determination to exact the penalty, if possible?

What traits of Portia's character are revealed in her speech, ll. 299–315?

Scene III.

This scene takes place on the day before that appointed for the trial (l. 34), while Bassanio is hurrying back to Venice. Antonio has been arrested and thrown into prison for failing to pay his bond. He has induced the jailer to accompany him

on a visit to Shylock in the faint hope of persuading the Jew to waive the exaction of the penalty.

The scene shows Antonio at the lowest depth of humiliation; the royal merchant is forced humbly to supplicate the Jew whom he had spurned and spat upon. Antonio's character, however, appears but little changed by his misfortune; his old indifference to life is clearly seen in his last speech, and nowhere does he break out in lamentations over his fate or in curses on his enemy. Shylock, on the other hand, indulges in an outburst of unrestrained malice which contrasts sharply with his fawning manner toward Antonio at their first meeting. Nowhere, not even in the trial scene, does he appear so black a villain as here. We naturally take the side of his victim, while at the same time the firm conviction expressed by Antonio that the law will not intervene heightens our curiosity as to the means by which the merchant is to be rescued, and so increases the dramatic effect.

10. *to come abroad with him;* to bring him out of the prison.

14. *a soft and dull-eyed fool.* Pity, as well as generosity, seems pure folly to Shylock. *Dull-eyed* means 'pitiful,' 'sad-looking.'

19. *kept*, lived. The phrase "where do you keep?" meaning "where do you live?" is said to be still in use in the University of Cambridge.

21. *his reason well I know.* As a matter of fact, Antonio knows only one of the reasons that are impelling Shylock to revenge. He was incapable of appreciating the intensity of Shylock's racial feeling, and, of course, felt himself quite innocent of complicity in Jessica's elopement.

26–31. The grammatical construction of these lines is awkward, but the sense is fairly plain. They may be paraphrased as follows: "The Duke cannot interfere to prevent the operation of the law (which Shylock was invoking against Antonio), for if the privileges (*commodity*) which strangers (Shylock not being a Venetian citizen is here spoken of as an alien) enjoy in Venice are denied to them, the refusal will be a scandal on

Venetian justice; and there is an additional reason for the Duke's non-interference in the fact that the commerce of Venice is largely dependent on the strangers within her gates." For a further discussion of this passage see Textual Notes, p. 187.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

Why does Shylock call Antonio a fool?

What act would make Shylock appear a fool in his own eyes?

What do these facts show as to Shylock's character?

In what does the humiliation of Antonio's position consist?

What reason does Antonio assign for Shylock's hatred?

What other reason is shown in Shylock's second speech?

Why does Antonio think that the Duke will not interfere?

What indication of the time of this scene is given in the last speech of Antonio?

Scene IV.

This scene takes place at Belmont immediately after Bassanio's departure for Venice. It shows us Portia's strong feeling of affection for her husband's friend and benefactor, and gives us an inkling of the plan she has formed to rescue him.

3. *god-like amity.* Such friendship as that between Antonio and Bassanio has something divine in its nature. Lorenzo sees that Portia realizes this, and compliments her on her true and lofty conception of friendship.

8–9. " You would be prouder of sending your husband hence on his wedding-day to rescue his friend than any common act of benevolence could make you."

15. *lineaments;* a word used by Elizabethan writers to denote bodily traits in general, not merely the features as to-day.

19. *the cost.* Portia speaks as if the money she had given Bassanio to buy off Shylock were going to accomplish its purpose. As we see a few lines later on, she knows that this will not suffice and that she must employ other means to rescue Antonio. But she does not care to make a confidant of the light-hearted Lorenzo.

20. *the semblance of my soul;* the image of my husband, who is as dear to me as my own soul. Portia refers to the idea before mentioned that there must be a certain likeness between two such friends as Bassanio and Antonio.

22. *This;* such talk as this about the money which she has given to free Antonio.

23. *hear other things;* let us change the subject. See Textual Notes, p. 188.

31. *a monastery.* There was really a monastery, or rather a convent, three miles or so away from the place where Belmont is supposed to have stood.

49. *Padua;* an Italian city not far from Venice, famous for its law-school. See Textual Notes, p. 188.

51. *notes and garments.* The notes would be the legal opinion of Dr. Bellario, whom we must suppose to be a famous jurist at Padua, on the case of Shylock *vs.* Antonio. The garments are the robes of a doctor of laws in which Portia intends to disguise herself before appearing in the Venetian court.

52. *with imagined speed;* with all the speed imaginable.

53. *the traject.* The ferries in and about Venice are called *traghetti*, of which this word is probably an English rendering. The use of this word is one of the many little signs in the play that Shakespeare, if he had not visited Venice, knew much more about it than he could learn from books. See Textual Notes, p. 188.

61–62. *think we are accomplished with that we lack;* think we are really men; literally, that we have all the male characteristics which we do not possess.

65. *a braver grace;* a more dashing air.

67. *a reed voice;* a piping voice, such as is heard in the boy who is just becoming a man.

69. *quaint lies;* ingenious, elaborate stories.

72. *could not do withal;* could not help it.

77. *bragging Jacks;* Portia's term of contempt for the raw boys she is speaking of. It is rather curious that she speaks in this passage as if she meant to assume the disguise of a page; probably it is only the working of her lively fancy which leads

her to express what she would do in case she ever put on such a dress. As a matter of fact her demeanor in the doctor's robes is as dignified as possible.

84. *twenty miles.* It is exactly twenty miles from Venice to Dolo, a town on the mainland near which Belmont is supposed to have been situated.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What reason does Portia give for her eagerness to rescue Antonio?

Why does she conceal her real design from Lorenzo?

How much of her design can be gathered from her speech to Balthasar?

What trait of Portia's character appears in her speech to Nerissa, ll. 60–78?

Scene V.

This scene is laid at Belmont immediately after Portia's departure and serves to fill up the time necessary for her journey to Venice. Launcelot's jests with Jessica as to the faint chance of her final salvation and his persistent punning with Lorenzo probably seemed funnier to an Elizabethan audience than they do to-day. The one thing of importance in the scene is Jessica's tribute to Portia. A woman who can make so deep an impression on such a light and volatile mind as that of the pretty Jewess is indeed fitted to render happy a husband so capable of appreciating her worth as Bassanio.

3. *I fear you;* I fear for you.

5. *agitation;* one of Launcelot's usual mistakes. He probably means 'cogitation,' i.e., the result of his consideration of the matter.

20. *gone both ways;* lost, whether you are the Jew's daughter or not.

54. *stomachs;* a pun. *Stomach* in Shakespeare's time had the second meaning of 'appetite.'

57. *cover;* another pun. *Cover* meant both 'lay the table'

and 'put on a hat.' Launcelot declares that he is too good a servant to put on his hat in his master's presence.

60. *quarrelling with occasion;* quibbling on every opportunity.

70. *O dear discretion.* Lorenzo pities *discretion*, i.e., plain common sense, for the way in which it is abused by Launcelot's wild talk.

How his words are suited; how ill his words are adapted to the matter in hand. They are good words in themselves; but he uses them at the wrong time and in the wrong place.

74. *garnish'd;* supplied with words.

75. *Defy the matter;* disregard the subject for the sake of a *tricksy word*, i.e. a pun or jest.

82. *mean it.* *Mean* in this passage has the sense of 'aim at,' and *it* refers to *heaven* in the preceding line. The meaning of the passage is that unless Bassanio, who through his marriage with Portia has a foretaste in this world of the joys of heaven, is roused by them to an earnest effort to enter heaven, the doors of paradise would justly be closed against him. For a further discussion of this much-disputed passage see Textual Notes, p. 189.

92. *stomach;* in the sense above noted of 'appetite.' "Let me praise you while I feel like doing it."

95. *digest;* used here with the meaning of 'swallow down,' 'make the best of.'

96. *set you forth;* describe you in full.

Questions on the Scene.

What is the dramatic purpose of this scene?

What light is thrown upon Jessica's character by her jesting with Launcelot?

What opinion has Jessica formed of Portia?

What does the fact that she has formed such an opinion show as to Jessica's own character?

ACT IV.

Scene I.

This scene constitutes what is technically called the *dénouement* of the drama. In other words this scene closes the action of the drama by solving the problem which the earlier portion of the play has raised—namely, how Antonio is to be delivered from the clutches of Shylock.

This solution belongs, of course, to the Bond Story of which it is the fitting close; but it is brought about by Portia, the heroine of the Casket Story, and thus the two main threads of the drama are finally and indissolubly interwoven.

The scene itself is, perhaps, the most familiar in all Shakespeare; its poetic beauty, its vivid characterization, and its dramatic effectiveness are so evident that it seems needless to dwell upon them. But it may be well to point out very briefly with what deliberate art Shakespeare proceeds in the construction of this scene. At its very opening Shylock's scornful rejection of the Duke's appeal to his humanity, and of Bassanio's appeal to his love of money, shows plainly the deadly danger which threatens Antonio. Portia's statement that the bond is legal and that the state will not interfere to prevent Shylock from exacting the penalty still further darkens the prospect of Antonio's escape. In the meantime Shylock's remorseless cruelty and his persistent attempt to make the law the instrument of his revenge have wholly alienated our sympathies from him. Thus when the law which he has invoked is turned against him, we feel not only that he is rightly served, but that he is caught in his own snare.

It should be noted, however, that the law which Portia cites against Shylock does not positively prevent him from exacting the penalty. Had he been willing to secure his revenge at the cost of his own life, he might still have done so. But Shylock is incapable of such heroic action. In a sense, therefore, the final safety of Antonio is due as much to the weakness of Shy-

lock as to the wisdom of Portia, and this is as it should be, for thus the events of the drama spring naturally from the characters of the personages.

By the defeat of Shylock's plot a happy ending is secured for the drama. In order to strengthen this effect and close the play, not with the serious and almost tragic note of the court scene, but with the playful quarrels and merry jests of young lovers, the Ring Episode is introduced immediately after sentence has been passed upon Shylock, to connect this scene with the last act of the play.

The Duke; the Doge of Venice. It was not part of his duty to preside at such a trial as this; Shakespeare introduces him for scenic effect.

1. *What;* not an exclamation of surprise at seeing Antonio, but rather equivalent to our modern 'well,' used to begin a speech or clause.

10. *envy's.* *Envy* here has the meaning of 'hatred' or 'malice.'

16. *make room.* Evidently the court was crowded. We know from III. ii. 280–282. that Shylock's suit against Antonio had excited the greatest interest in Venice. Every effort had been made to settle it out of court, and when all these efforts failed, the populace thronged the court to see what would be the upshot of the case.

18. *lead'st this fashion;* keepest up this appearance.

19. *the last hour of act;* the very hour when, if ever, your malice must be put into action.

20. *strange.* Here and in the next line this word means 'extraordinary,' 'remarkable.'

22. *where*, whereas.

exacts. In Elizabethan English verbs ending in 't' often formed the second person singular of the present indicative by adding 's' instead of 'est.' See Textual Notes, p. 190.

24. *loose the forfeiture;* remit the penalty.

25. *moiety*, a portion. It sometimes means a half, sometimes a third.

32. *Turks and Tartars;* mentioned here as types of savage and barbarous races.

34. *gentle.* It has been suggested that the Duke is here playing on the similarity of sound between 'gentle' and 'Gentile' as Gratiano does in II. vi. 51. The meaning would then be, "We all expect such an answer as a Gentile, that is, a Christian, would make." But as the Duke is trying to soften Shylock's heart, he would not be at all likely to run the risk of offending him by such a punning reference to his religion. Shakespeare was, no doubt, too fond of puns; but there is no need of smelling out a pun where none exists.

35. *possessed your Grace of what I purpose;* informed your Grace of my purpose.

37. *the due and forfeit;* the due forfeit.

39. *your charter and your city's freedom;* the charter which ensures the freedom of your city. Shylock speaks as if the rights and privileges of Venice depended, like those of most English cities in Shakespeare's day, upon a charter granted by the king, which could be revoked or annulled if the city abused its privileges. As a matter of fact, Venice was a sovereign and independent state.

47. *gaping pig;* either a squealing pig, or a roast pig's head with a lemon in its open mouth. The latter seems the more likely.

49. *sings i' the nose;* utters its shrill nasal note.

50. *affection;* sympathy. For a discussion of the text and punctuation of this disputed passage see Textual Notes, p. 191.

51. *passion;* the inner, subjective feeling which is dominated by *affection*, that is sympathy with outer, objective things.

it, passion.

52. *it*, affection. The sense of the whole passage is as follows: "The feelings of men are often influenced by causes outside of themselves in a way for which they can give no rational explanation."

56. *woollen;* covered with a woollen cloth.

of force; by necessity.

58. For a discussion of the punctuation see Textual Notes, p. 191.

60. *lodged hate . . . certain loathing;* rooted hate, fixed loathing.

62. *a losing suit.* Shylock calls his suit against Antonio "a losing suit," because even if he won it and secured the forfeiture, he would lose the money he had loaned Antonio.

68. *offence.* The word means here 'feeling of resentment,' as in our modern phrase 'to take offence.' Shylock, however, understands it as meaning an actual wrong done, as in our modern phrase 'an offence committed.'

73–74. See Textual Notes, p. 192.

82. *with all brief and plain conveniency;* with all suitable directness and despatch.

87. *draw*, accept.

89. This speech is thoroughly characteristic of Shylock the Jew. The object of the pious Hebrew under the old dispensation was to keep in every detail the law of Moses and so escape the judgment of God upon sinners. Man's need of mercy and God's readiness to forgive are essentially Christian, as man's duty to live righteously and God's readiness to punish sinners are Hebrew doctrines.

90. Shylock now turns upon the Duke and the Christians who are urging him to spare Antonio for humanity's sake with a countercharge of cruelty. Do they not abuse their slaves on the plea that the slaves are their own property? Let them clear their own skirts before they attack him.

104. "I have the power to adjourn this session of the court."

105. *Bellario, a learned doctor.* When Shakespeare wrote this play there lived in Padua a scholar, Ottonello Disculzio, who appears to have been the prototype of Bellario. He was Professor of Law in the University of Padua, and so famous for his knowledge and eloquence that he was constantly consulted by the Venetian government. Shakespeare may very well have heard of him from one of the English students at the University. Portia would naturally consult her learned cousin in the case of Shylock *vs.* Antonio. When she learned from him

that the Duke of Venice had sent for him to decide the case, the happy idea occurred to her of going in disguise as his substitute.

125. *the hangman's axe.* The word 'hangman' in Shakespeare's time was generally used for 'executioner.'

128. For the substitution in this line of *inexorable* for the generally received *inexecrable* see Textual Notes, p. 192.

129. "Justice is to blame for allowing you to live."

131. *Pythagoras;* an old Grecian philosopher who taught that after death the souls of some men pass into the bodies of animals and *vice versa.* Shakespeare was familiar with this doctrine and greatly inclined to laugh at it. For instance, in *As You Like It* he makes Rosalind say in reference to the poetry which she had found on a palm-tree, "I was never so be-rhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat." Compare also the amusing dialogue between the Fool and Malvolio on this topic in *Twelfth Night* (IV. ii. 54–65.)

134. *a wolf who hanged.* The construction here is rather awkward. *Who* looks like the nominative of a verb, but it must be taken with *hanged* as a nominative absolute. The subject of *did fleet* in l. 135 is not *who* but *soul.* It appears from an old diary of a traveller in England that it was formerly customary to hang the bodies of dead wolves on gallows, perhaps to frighten off the living.

135. *fleet,* flit. The word is repeatedly used by Shakespeare to denote the passing of the soul from the body.

144. *doctor;* a doctor of laws.

162–163. "Do not allow his youth to prevent his receiving the high estimation his learning deserves."

166. "And a trial of him will make his praise more widely known."

170. *take your place.* Portia's proper place, representing as she does the learned Bellario who has been asked to act as judge, is on the judge's bench below the Duke's throne. Throughout the scene, it must be remembered, she appears

not as an advocate for Antonio, but as a judge recognized by both parties in the case.

171–172. *the difference that holds this present question;* the controversy, or suit, that is now being tried.

180. *stand within his danger;* are at his mercy.

184. This is one of the most familiar lines of Shakespeare; but it is greatly to be doubted whether every one who glibly quotes it understands its meaning. As Dr. Furness has pointed out, the main stress is to be laid on *quality*, i.e. essential characteristic. *Strained* means 'constrained.' We may paraphrase the whole line as follows: "The essential characteristic of mercy is that it is voluntary and not enforced." This is in answer to Shylock's angry question, "On what compulsion must I?"

186. *twice blest;* doubly full of blessing.

191. *the attribute to awe and majesty;* the characteristic of awe-inspiring majesty.

192. *wherein doth sit. Wherein* refers to the *temporal power*. It is on account of this power that a king is dreaded and feared by his subjects.

201. *That same prayer;* the Lord's Prayer where the plea "forgive us our debts," is followed by the reason, "as we forgive our debtors." It has been said that Portia ought not to quote the Lord's Prayer to a Jew. But the prayer itself is a mosaic of phrases from the Hebrew Scriptures.

206. *My deeds upon my head.* By uttering these words Shylock in effect closes the gates of mercy upon himself. When it is shown later on that his course of action has made him liable to the penalty of death, he cannot beg for mercy, since he has professed his willingness to accept the consequences of his deeds.

214. *malice bears down truth;* the evil intent of Shylock conquers the simple honesty of Antonio. *Truth* here means 'honesty.'

223. *A Daniel come to judgment.* The reference is to the *History of Susannah and the Elders*, one of the Apocryphal books

of the Bible, in which Daniel, although a mere youth, acts as a wise and righteous judge against two wicked elders.

233. *nearest the merchant's heart.* When Shylock first proposed the penalty to Antonio, he spoke of a pound "of your fair flesh to be cut off and taken in what part of your body pleaseth me." Evidently, however, when the bond was drawn up, Shylock managed to get the words, "nearest his heart," inserted.

247–249. "The intention and meaning of the law is fully applicable to the exaction of the penalty prescribed in the bond." In other words, Portia pronounces Shylock's demand to be perfectly legal.

257. *on your charge;* at your expense.

271. *Poverty;* pronounced here as a dissyllable.

272. For the metre of this line see Textual Notes, p. 194.

277. *a love,* a lover; the words 'lover' and 'friend' are almost interchangeable with Shakespeare.

281. *with all my heart.* This play on words is wholly in keeping with the quiet melancholy which characterizes Antonio.

282–287. This speech of Bassanio's must not be taken literally. In his agony that his own act had betrayed his friend into the hands of the Jew, he exclaims that he would willingly forfeit all the world to free him. Portia's answer, spoken we must suppose with a quiet smile, helps to remind the audience that this play is, after all, a comedy, and that some way will be found to deliver Antonio.

296. *Barrabas,* accented here on the first syllable. Barrabas, the name of the robber released at the time of Christ's crucifixion, was also that of the villain in the *Jew of Malta.* Shylock means that he wishes Jessica had married a criminal Jew rather than a Christian.

318. *this offer;* the offer made in l. 227. Shylock's haste to get his money, and not only his money, but a profit of 200%, as soon as he finds that he cannot secure his revenge still further lowers his character.

321. *all justice;* justice and nothing else.

228. *in the substance;* in the mass.

331. *in the estimation of a hair;* by the value, that is, the weight, of a hair.

335. *Why doth the Jew pause?* Dr. Furness has pointed out in an admirable note that in this pause the balance is "trembling between Comedy and Tragedy." Shylock might still have claimed his forfeiture and by sacrificing his own life brought about the death of his enemy. But such an end would have been inconsistent with the earlier scenes of the play.

347. *another hold.* So far Portia had merely defended Antonio from Shylock by showing that if the Jew attempted to cut the pound of flesh, he would expose himself to the severest penalties; now she goes a step farther and points out that by his indirect attempt upon the life of a Venetian citizen he has already subjected himself to these penalties. It is worth noting that this point is not found in the story from which Shakespeare drew most of the incidents of the *Merchant of Venice* (see outline of *Il Pecorone*, p. 205).

368. *the difference of our spirits;* the difference between the spirit of your religion and ours.

372. *drive unto;* diminish to, reduce to.

379. Gratiano's boisterous exultation over his fallen enemy at once expresses the feelings with which the greater part of Shakespeare's audience must have witnessed the discomfiture of the Jew, and serves to bring out clearly the more magnanimous spirit of Antonio.

383. *in use*, in trust. Antonio suggests that the Duke return to Shylock that half of his goods which was forfeited to the state, and that he himself take the other half, not as his own in fee simple, but simply as a life-trust, to go at Shylock's death to his son-in-law, Lorenzo.

386. *for this favour;* in return for this partial restoration of his property.

387. *become a Christian.* An Englishman of Shakespeare's day would not have considered this condition as a punishment inflicted upon Shylock, but rather as a signal mark of the benev-

olence of Antonio, who thus by kindly compulsion brought his bitter enemy into the true church. The great actors who have represented this as the last and most terrible blow to Shylock have sacrificed Shakespeare's meaning to their desire for stage effect.

396. *I am not well.* It has been suggested that Shylock leaves the court with the intention of committing suicide, but this seems to be a mere fanciful interpretation of the text. Nothing in the play demands his death, and the feeling that he had laid violent hands upon himself would cast a gloom over the poetry and romance of the last act.

499. *ten more;* to make up the twelve jurymen who, if Gratiano had been judge, would have voted to hang Shylock.

506. *gratify.* It is altogether repugnant to our modern ideas of justice that the successful party in a suit should give a present to the judge who decided in his favor; but it was by no means an unusual practice in Shakespeare's day. Bacon, while judge, received many presents from suitors in his court, and he seems to have had moral scruples about only such gifts as were offered before he had pronounced his decision.

410. *in lieu whereof;* in return for which.

419. *know me when we meet again.* There is, of course, a roguish under-meaning in the apparently simple request that Bassanio and Antonio would condescend to recognize the judge as a friend when next they met him.

434. *more depends on this than on the value;* more depends on my keeping this ring than its value would indicate.

451. *commandment;* pronounced in this line as a word of four syllables. In one of the old texts it is spelled *commandement.*

Questions on the Scene.

To what sentiment in Shylock does the Duke appeal, ll. 16–34?

What reason does Shylock give for his refusal to listen to this appeal?

What does Shylock mean by saying that it is his *humour* to claim the penalty?

What trait of Antonio's character is shown in his speeches to the Duke, ll. 6–13, and to Bassanio, ll. 70–82?

Why had the Duke sent for Bellario?

What is the purpose of Portia's speech beginning, "*The quality of mercy*"?

How does Shylock cut himself off from all sympathy by his answer to Portia?

Why does Portia suggest to Shylock to have a surgeon in attendance?

What two characteristic traits of Antonio are apparent in his farewell speech, ll. 265–281?

What dramatic effect is obtained by Bassanio's speech about his wife, ll. 282–287?

Is Portia's point about not shedding a drop of blood a good one? How could Shylock have answered her?

Was Portia justified in preventing Shylock from accepting the offer to pay the bond thrice over?

Is Portia's point about not cutting more or less than an exact pound a good one?

Was she right in refusing to allow Shylock his principal?

How does Portia's third point compare in force with the previous two?

What is the exact disposition that is made of Shylock's property?

In what state of mind does Shylock leave the stage?

At what point in the scene does the issue waver between tragedy and comedy? What decides the issue?

Was there anything improper in Antonio's "gratifying" the judge?

What double meaning is concealed in l. 419?

Why does Portia ask for the ring?

What finally induces Bassanio to grant this request? Is he to blame for this?

Scene II.

This short scene is what we may call a 'business' one. It continues the Ring Episode which was begun in the last scene.

Portia receives the ring she has asked for, and Nerissa announces her intention of getting her ring back from her husband. The fact that Gratiano, who has brought the ring to Portia, is going to guide Nerissa to Shylock's house, gives her the necessary opportunity to accomplish her purpose.

6. *upon more advice;* upon further deliberation.

16. *old swearing;* plenty of swearing.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What is the purpose of this scene?

What additional effect is obtained by Nerissa's getting back her ring from Gratiano?

ACT V.

Scene I.

The last act with its single scene provides the appropriate happy ending for the comedy. Had the play closed with the trial scene, as some modern actors, wishing to centre all the interest in the figure of Shylock, have arranged it, the impression left on the mind of the spectators would have been almost painful. Villain as Shylock is, he is so thoroughly human that we are deeply moved by his utter overthrow. In order to banish this impression from our minds, Shakespeare transports us to the gardens of Belmont and lets us overhear the whispers of lovers on a moonlight night, and laugh at the trick that Portia and her maid play upon their husbands. The mock quarrel and the reconciliation, the revelation of the part Portia has played in saving Antonio, the restoration of the merchant's fortune, all serve to make us forget the storm and stress of the fourth act. The scene is flooded with moonlight and the magic beauty of the verse rivals that of the southern summer night itself.

4. *Troilus;* one of the many sons of Priam. He fell in love with Cressida a beautiful lady in Troy. For a time she returned his love; but she was obliged to leave Troy and join her father in the Grecian army, which was besieging that city. Here she

soon forgot Troilus and transferred her affections to a Grecian lover. Chaucer told this story in a charming poem called *Troilus and Criseyde*, with which Shakespeare was no doubt familiar, for the picture of Troilus on the walls is taken almost direct from Chaucer. Some years after the *Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare himself composed a play on this story, called *Troilus and Cressida*.

7. *Thisbe.* According to an old story, Thisbe, a lady in Babylon, loved a youth called Pyramus. Their parents opposed their marriage, so they planned to meet outside the city on a moonlight night and run away together. Thisbe, who came first to the trysting place, was frightened by a lioness and fled, leaving behind her a veil which the beast tore to pieces and stained with blood from its jaws. When Pyramus, who came after the lioness had departed, saw the torn and bloody veil he thought that the beast had devoured Thisbe and straightway killed himself. Chaucer included this story in his *Legend of Good Women*, and Shakespeare had treated it jestingly in his *Midsummer Night's Dream* before he wrote the *Merchant of Venice*.

10. *Dido;* the famous queen of Carthage whose love for Aeneas is told by Virgil. The willow which Shakespeare puts into her hand was the symbol of deserted, or unhappy, love.

13. *Medea;* a famous witch of Grecian legend. She helped her lover, Jason, win the golden fleece and then fled with him to his home. On his request she renewed the youth of his father, Aeson, by a magical concoction of herbs gathered by moonlight.

23. *I would out-night you;* I would beat you in this contest of mentioning nights famous in the annals of love.

31. *holy crosses;* roadside crosses where travellers and pilgrims stopped to rest and pray.

39. Launcelot is imitating the horn of the courier, or *post*, whom he has just met.

49. *expect their coming;* await their arrival.

51–52. *signify . . . within the house;* tell the servants in the house.

57. *become the touches;* suit the notes.

59. *Patens*, see Glossary and Textual Notes, p. 198.

62. *still quiring;* forever singing. The old idea of the 'music of the spheres' was that the revolution of each planet in its orbit produced a musical note, and all these notes blended together in a wonderful harmony. Shakespeare expands the old conception and sets all the stars in heaven singing, as they move, in harmony with the continual song of the cherubim before the throne of God. Perhaps he was thinking of Job xxxviii. 7: "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

the young-eye cherubins. Cherubins was the regular plural form in Shakespeare; to-day we use the correct Hebrew form, 'cherubim'. A cherub is one of the higher order of angelic beings gifted especially with the attribute of knowledge and the contemplation of divine mysteries. Shakespeare repeatedly refers to the cherubic power of vision, and he may have meant to allude to it here by the adjective *young-eyed*, i.e., with the keen vision of eternal youth. On the other hand, a phrase in *Othello* IV. ii. 63. "Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin," suggests that *young-eyed* refers to the youthful beauty of the cherubim.

63–65. There has been much debate over the exact meaning and grammatical construction of these lines. The sense seems to be: "There is in our immortal souls a harmony like that of the stars, but so long as this harmony is surrounded and deadened by the earthly body, *this muddy vesture of decay*, we can not hear it." It was an old doctrine of Grecian philosophy that the soul itself was a harmony. See Textual Notes, p. 198.

77. *make a mutual stand;* make a common, or simultaneous, halt.

79. *the poet.* Perhaps Shakespeare here alludes to his favorite Latin poet, Ovid, who tells at some length the story of Orpheus. This famous minstrel is said to have played so sweetly on the harp that not only wild beasts, but the very stones and trees, left their places to follow after his music.

82. *his nature;* its nature. *Nought*, l. 81, is the antecedent of the pronoun. Lines 81–82 may be paraphrased: "There is nothing so soulless and brutish that its nature may not, for a time at least, be softened by music."

86. *spirit;* pronounced almost like 'sprit.'

87. *Erebus;* in Grecian mythology a dark and gloomy region in the lower world; here used as equivalent to hell.

98. *music . . . of the house;* the company of musicians kept by Portia at Belmont.

101. *silence bestows that virtue on it;* the silence of the night increases the power and charm of the music.

107–108. "How many things owe to attendant circumstances the charm which displays them at their best and wins them their due meed of praise."

109. *Endymion;* the beautiful shepherd of Greek mythology who was loved by Diana, the goddess of the moon. As we see from Nerissa's words in l. 92 the moon, which had been shining so brightly at the beginning of the scene, is now covered by clouds. Portia, who wishes to stop the music which is playing in honor of her return, uses this fact as a pretty and fanciful reason for her request. Portia's remark in ll. 112–113, that Lorenzo knows her by her voice, shows that it is now so dark that he cannot see her face.

121. *a tucket;* a flourish on a trumpet.

124–126. The clouds have now passed away and it is again moonlight almost as bright as day.

127. *hold day with the Antipodes;* enjoy the day at the same time that people on the opposite side of the globe do.

129–130. For the word-play on *light* see note on II. vi. 42.

136–137. There is a play on the word *bound* in these lines. In l. 136, it means 'indebted;' in l. 137 it means 'bound by a legal tie.' Portia plays on the word to relieve the embarrassment of Bassanio in presenting to his bride the man who had so nearly lost his life to supply his friend with the means to woo and win her.

141. *scant this breathing courtesy;* cut short this courtesy which consists of mere words.

142. With this speech of Gratiano's the Ring Episode is brought upon the scene. We can hear his loud voice breaking into the quiet talk between Portia, Bassanio, and Antonio, with vehement protests of innocence.

148. A syllable is wanting in this line. If the reader pauses for a moment after *me*, the rhythm will be preserved.

149. *cutler's poetry;* such poetry as a cutler would engrave upon a knife. It is not very good taste in Gratiano to compare the *posy* on the ring which his wife had given him with the doggerel a cutler might put on a knife; but Gratiano is not distinguished for good taste.

162. *scrubbed;* little and mean-looking. The joke lies in Gratiano's thus abusing his wife's looks and figure to her face without being in the least aware of what he is doing. And it is not less amusing to find Gratiano, the everlasting talker, complaining of the *prating boy* who had talked him out of his ring.

169. The metre in this line is a little awkward. Dr. Furness suggests that '*riveted*' should be pronounced as a dissyllable; but this hardly improves the rhythm, although it does away with the superfluous syllable. "Read the line with a strong emphasis on *riveted*, and the metre takes care of itself." Gummere.

175. This line, too, has an extra syllable, but by reading with strong emphasis on *too unkind* and hurrying over the rest the rhythm will flow smoothly enough.

189. It is not very gentlemanly of Gratiano to get Bassanio into trouble in this way; but he is so anxious to excuse himself that he does not stop to think.

199–208. We must not imagine Portia speaking these lines in a loud and angry tone. Those who have seen Miss Ellen Terry as Portia can never forget the spirit of laughing roguery which seemed to inspire her in this scene.

199. *the virtue of the ring;* the power of the ring.

201. *your honour to contain the ring;* how much it was to your honor to keep the ring.

205. *terms of zeal;* positive language.

wanted the modesty; the subject is 'who,' understood.

206. *to urge the thing held as a ceremony;* to demand the ring which you held sacred.

210. *a civil doctor;* a Doctor of Civil Law.

217. *I was beset with shame and courtesy;* I was attacked at once by shame for refusing the man to whom I owed so much and by courtesy which urged me to grant his request. Bassanio makes a very good defence of his case; but Portia's answer plunges him into still deeper trouble, for she declares that if the Doctor was so irresistible, Bassanio had better keep him away from her.

239. Note Portia's prompt courtesy to Antonio. She is quite willing to tease her husband; but she doesn't want Antonio to think for a moment that he is to blame.

240. *this enforced wrong;* this wrong I was compelled to do you.

266. Some of the dialogue in this scene is rather too broad for our modern taste, and is omitted from this edition. Just as Gratiano begins to lose his head completely and to shout aloud of his wrongs, Portia, who sees that the jest has gone far enough, stops him and clears up the whole affair of the disguises and the rings.

278. *You shall not know by what strange accident.* It is, of course, the wish to reward Antonio for his sufferings that leads Shakespeare to add to the original story this incident of his ships having come safe to harbor. There must not be a shadow of loss or disappointment over the happy close of the play. With the same intention the runaway couple, Lorenzo and Jessica, are here presented with a deed of gift conveying to them on Shylock's death his whole fortune.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE.

What is Shakespeare's purpose in opening the scene with this duet by Lorenzo and Jessica?

What note is struck by their reminiscences of old stories?

Why does Portia travel by night to return to Belmont?

What trait of character is shown by Lorenzo's remarks on the music of the spheres?

Why does Portia ask her guests and her servants not to let Bassanio know that she had been away from home?

How is the mock quarrel about the rings started?

How does Portia discover that Bassanio has given away her ring?

Why does she insist that he has given the ring to a woman?

How is the trick of the rings cleared up?

Why does Shakespeare bring Antonio's supposedly lost ships safe to harbor?

Why does Portia decline to tell how she had heard of their safe arrival?

Why does Shakespeare take this opportunity to let Lorenzo and Jessica know of the fortune that awaits them?

What is the general effect of the whole scene as contrasted with the trial scene of the preceding act?

Textual Notes.

In July, 1598, James Roberts, an enterprising London printer, entered on the Stationers' Registers "a booke of the Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce. Provided that yt bee not prynted by the same James Robertes or anye other whatsoever without lycence first had from the Right honourable the lord Chamberlen." Apparently Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's men, applied to their patron to refuse the necessary license, for the book did not appear for over two years. In the mean time another printer, Thomas Heyes, appears to have secured another copy of the play, for in October, 1600, we find the following entry credited to "Thomas Haies" in the Registers: "Entred for his copie . . . by Consent of master Robertes. A booke called the booke of the merchant of Venyce." Shakespeare's company apparently no longer wished to prevent the play from appearing in print, and both copies came out in quarto form in the same year, 1600. Roberts must have secured the job of printing Heyes's copy,—the title-page states that it was printed by I. R. (James Roberts) for Thomas Heyes—in consideration of his allowing it to appear. He apparently entrusted the work to a more careless compositor than the man who set up his own copy. Consequently certain editors, among them Dr. Furness, consider that Q_1 (Roberts's Quarto) is on the whole the more trustworthy text. There are, however, certain differences, which will be pointed out in the following notes, that have convinced some critics, especially Dr. Furnivall, that Q_2 (Heyes's Quarto) contains a few corrections due to Shakespeare himself. The two copies were probably printed from two separate transcripts of the original manuscript. The company apparently kept a copy of Heyes's Quarto by them, introduced from time to time a few changes, and when Heming and Condell were

gathering materials for the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays turned over to them this play-house copy. The *Merchant of Venice* in the First Folio is clearly printed from the Heyes Quarto.

It is plain from the above that the three old editions of the text go back to a common source, the original manuscript—probably in Shakespeare's handwriting—of the drama. It has been well said by Dr. Furness that they may be treated as "proof-sheets out of which we may, with what power of insight Nature has vouchsafed to us, prepare our own text with an abounding charity for those who do not agree with us, which in all likelihood will comprise the rest of mankind."

ACT I.

Scene I.

27. *dock'd.* Q_1 has *dockes;* the other old texts, *docks*. The change made by Rowe to *dock'd* has been generally received by modern editors. Furness believes that the word originally written was *dockd* and that this was misprinted *docks*.

84. *alabaster*. All the old editions read *alablaster*, the usual spelling in Shakespeare's day. The change was made by Pope.

93. The text follows the Qq; Ff, *I am Sir an Oracle*. All editors since Rowe follow the Qq.

95. *these*, the reading of Q_2 F_1, is preferable to *those* of Q_1, since it maintains the connection, which is broken by the latter, between the sort of men "whose visages do cream and mantle," and the men "who are only reputed wise for saying nothing."

113. All the old editions read: "*It is that anything now.*" Of the various attempts to correct the evident mistake, Rowe's alone has met with general approbation and is adopted in the present text. Johnson suggested *new* for *now;* but this does not so well connect the speech with the following words.

115. The Ff omit *as*. All editors except Rowe and Knight follow the Qq.

155. Here again F_1 has dropped a word, *now*, from the line.

Scene II.

7. *It is no mean happiness.* So the Qq; Ff *It is no small happiness*, thus destroying the characteristically Shakesperian play on words.

18. The awkward reading of the Qq, *then to be*, is corrected by F_1 into *then be.*

23. *reasoning.* For this reading of the Qq, F_1 substitutes *reason*, which Dr. Furness prefers, taking *reason* in the sense of 'speech,' 'discourse,' 'talk.' It seems best, however, to follow all modern editors and adopt the reading of the Qq, taking *reasoning* as alluding to the debate which Portia has been carrying on with Nerissa.

25–26. Modern editors follow the Ff in reading *whom* in both these lines instead of the ungrammatical, but characteristically Elizabethan, *who*, of the Qq.

27. *Is it.* So the Qq. The *it is* of the F_1 is a manifest error.

36. Editors are divided as to whether to print the *you* of Q_2F_1 between *who* and *shall* of this line, or to omit it with Q_1. Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, Warburton, Collier, Rolfe, Delius, and Furnivall approve the reading of Q_2F_1, while Johnson, Hudson, the Cambridge editors, Furness, Verity, and Gummere follow Q_1. The Cambridge editors hold that, *ceteris paribus*, Q_1 is the higher authority; Dr. Furness maintains that in this instance it gives us the better text. On the other hand, Furnivall cites this very line as an instance where Q_2 supplies a *necessary* word. omitted in Q_1 (Forewords to Griggs' Reprint of Q_1, p. v). A consideration of the whole passage in Q_1 leaves no doubt as to the corruptness of that text. The passage reads there as follows: "therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and leade, wherof who chooses his meaning chooses you, no doubt you will never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love." It seems plain that the *you* which in Q_2 follows *who* was by the printer of this passage in Q_1 misplaced and set after *no doubt.* The editors who follow Q_1 in

omitting *you* in l. 36, silently drop this first *you* from the text. Dr. Furness alone proposes to retain it, and to break the sentence by putting a period between *you* and *no doubt.* This, however, involves such a radical reconstruction of the passage that it has not been adopted, so far as I know, by any subsequent editors. As to the interpretation of the passage see note, p. 103.

47. It is interesting in connection with what has been said above to note that in this line too Q_1 omits a necessary word, i.e., *him.*

49. The Q_1 reading *there is* is generally preferred to the Q_2F_1 reading, *is there.*

51. Both Qq have *if;* Ff *and.*

55. Both Qq have *be;* Ff *to be.*

59. There seems no good reason for altering the name *Le Boune*, which appears in the Qq, Ff_{1-2} to *Le Bon.* The change was made by Capell and has been adopted by subsequent editors.

65. *Throstle.* Qq and F_1 read *trassell*, which Furness speaks of as a phonetic spelling of *throstle*, the correction made by Pope. In the only other place where the word occurs in Shakespeare (M. N. D., III. i. 130) both Qq and F_1 read *throstle.*

70. *Shall*, so the Qq; Ff *should.* Since Hanmer all editors have followed the Qq. Dr. Furness, however believes *should* the better reading. The syntax of the clause seems to demand *shall* rather than *should.*

71. *Fauconbridge* of QqF_1 is, I think, wrongly altered to *Falconbridge* by modern editors.

83. *Scottish* of the Qq was altered by the editors of F_1 to *other* for fear of offending James I.

96. *and* of QqF_1 was altered by Capell to *an*, in which he has been followed by most modern editors. There seems, however, no need to make the change, since *and* was commonly used in Shakespeare's time as a conditional conjunction; cf. the Ff reading in l. 51 of this scene. Except in the form *an' 't* (=*and it*) *an* in the sense of *if* is found but once in F_1 (L. L. L., V. ii. 232).

121. The Qq reading, *I pray God grant* was altered by the

players into *I wish* to escape the penalty of £10, fixed by the act of 1605, for using the name of God upon the stage. This change appears in Ff. The true reading was restored by Capell.

124. Q_1 omits *a* before scholar.

126. The reading of the old copies, *Mountferrat*, has been changed by modern editors to *Montferrat*.

127–8. There is little to choose between the reading of Q_1, *he was so called*, and that of Q_2F_1, *so was he called*. Most editors prefer the latter.

134. F_1 omits this line, probably by accident, although Knight and R. G. White prefer the F_1 reading.

135. *for*. F_1 omits this word, which is found in both Qq.

147. *gate*, the reading of Q_2F_1, is better than *gates* of Q_1, since it sharpens the antithesis.

Scene III.

20. *Rialto*. This word seems to have given great trouble to the old compositors. In this line and l. 39 we find in the old Qq and Ff the following spellings: Ryalta, Ryalto, Royalto, Rialto. Modern texts follow the received modern spelling.

21. The comma after *hath* was supplied by Theobald, who has been followed by most modern editors.

62. The *albeit* of Q_2F_1 is generally preferred to the *although* of Q_1.

65–66. Q_1 reads,

65. Ile breake a custome: are you resolu'd
66. How much he would haue?

Q_2:

65. Ile breake a custome: is he yet possest
66. How much ye would?

F_1 follows Q_2, except that it misprints *he* for *ye* in l. 66. The reading of Q_2 has been followed by the best modern editors, and Furnivall considers this one of the two test-passages which settle the superiority of Q_2 to Q_1. On the other hand, Dr. Furness puts in a vigorous plea for the "superior simplicity and clearness of the text of Q_1."

No one, I think, however, who reads the two versions aloud, can fail to be impressed with the superiority of the metre in Q_2. The omission of the accented syllable in the 3rd foot of l. 65 in Q_1 causes the line to limp painfully, nor is the metre much helped by the proposal to read *resolv'd* as a trisyllable. And in the following line, although by contracting *he would* of Q_1 into *he'd* the metre is preserved, yet the accent, which in Q_2 falls properly on the emphatic word *would*, is thus thrown upon the unimportant *have*. As to diction *possest* seems to me, at least, rather more vigorous than *resolv'd*. The only objection to the Q_2 reading seems to consist in the fact that Antonio breaks off in his speech to Shylock and addresses Bassanio, that Shylock, and not Bassanio, answers the question Antonio had addressed to his friend, and that in l. 68 Shylock's *you* refers to Bassanio, and not to Antonio, to whom he has just been speaking. But this objection is very slight. Antonio despises Shylock and wishes to have as little to say to him as possible. It is quite characteristic that he should turn from him to Bassanio and ask, "Have you told him how much you want?" Shylock, on the other hand, is eager to do business with Antonio at first hand, and not through Bassanio (cf. ll. 30–31); he therefore anticipates Bassanio's answer. As to the *you* in l. 68 there is no difficulty whatever; Shylock turns to Bassanio as he says this and, perhaps, points to him. All in all it seems to me that the arrangement of speeches in Q_2 presents no difficulty, but, on the contrary, that the dialogue is more animated. I can see no reason whatever for changing *ye*, l. 66, into *we* as suggested by Walker and approved by Dr. Furness in case the Q_2 is adopted. In l. 65 I have ventured to insert the stage direction [*To Bass.*] to make the passage clearer to the reader.

75. The old texts have a full stop at the close of this line. The emendation of a comma and a dash proposed by Dyce, and almost unanimously adopted, shows how, in Booth's words, Antonio breaks in impatiently.

85. The old reading, Qq *pyld*, Ff *pil'd*, was altered to *peeled*

by Pope, and most modern editors accept this correction. In Shakespeare's time the words *peel*, 'to take off the bark,' and *pill* 'to take off the hair,' appeared to have been used interchangeably. Thus in I. King Henry VI, I. III. 30. we have "peeled (F_1 *piel'd*) priest" for "shaven priest." Inasmuch, however, as the form *pilled* still appears in the King James' Bible in Genesis xxx. 37, 38, to which passage Shylock is here alluding, it has seemed best to leave in the text the form which Shakespeare certainly used.

103. *godly.* I have ventured to restore to the text this correction of Rowe's, although most modern editors retain the reading *goodly* of the Qq and Ff. The repetition of *goodly* in this line is so tame; the substitution of the word *goodly* for *godly*, *good* for *God* and *vice versa*, so common in old editions, and finally the presence of *goodly* in l. 102, so evident a source of the printer's error, that I agree with Dr. Furness in holding *godly* for *goodly* to be a *lectio certissima*.

105. There does not seem to be any necessity for placing with the Cambridge editors a semicolon after *see* and a dash after *rate*. The old reading, *then let me see the rate*, gives a perfectly satisfactory sense.

113. *spit.* Here and in l. 127 Qq and Ff_{1-2} have *spet*. This obsolete form occurs only in the M. of V. (cf. II. VII. 45); everywhere else Shakespeare has *spit*.

123. *can.* So the Qq; Ff *should*. All modern editors prefer *can*.

126–7. These lines, which are printed as one in QqFf were first separated by Steevens.

135. *a breed of.* I prefer this reading of the Ff to the *breed for* of the Qq. As Dr. Furness points out Antonio has in mind the words of Shylock, "*I make it* (my gold and silver) *breed;*" and he conveys a reproach to him for his usury by calling metal *barren*. *A breed for barren metal* can only mean "a breed for the use of barren metal," and this seems much less pointed than the reading of the Ff. May not the change from *for* to *of* be Shakespeare's own, noted in the margin of the play-house copy and reproduced in the printing of F_1?

138. Nearly all editors prefer the reading of the Qq *penalty* to that of the Ff *penalties*.

144. Q_3 substitutes the name of Antonio here for that of Bassanio, and it is a very plausible suggestion. Bassanio is suspicious of Shylock's intentions (cf. ll. 155–6 and l. 180), whereas Antonio falls at once into the snare, and remarks repeatedly on the kindness of the Jew (ll. 164, 179). But the weight of authority is so decidedly against the change that I have not ventured to put it in the text.

152. The text, like that of all editors since Pope, follows the Qq. Ff have *it pleaseth*.

178. The *Ile* of the old texts was expanded to I *will* by Theobald *metris causa*.

179. Most editors follow the Qq in reading *The Hebrew* instead of the Ff *This Hebrew*. It seems as if *This* might be a player's corruption springing from the gesture with which the impersonator of Antonio indicated the retiring Shylock. *The Hebrew* corresponds to *The Jew* of l. 154.

Q_1 reads *so kind*, which injures the metre.

ACT II.

Scene I.

4. Q_1 omits *me*.

11. Q_1 reads *Hath;* Q_2F_1 *Have*. It seems better where authorities are so equally divided to follow the reading of Q_2F_1 rather than to shock our modern sense of grammatical propriety by reading with the Cambridge editors: "*Virgins hath loved.*"

27. Q_1 reads *out-stare;* Q_2F_1 *ore-stare*. The latter, though adopted by Knight, Rolfe, and a few others, is generally abandoned in favor of the more spirited reading of Q_1.

30. Q_1Ff agree here on *he*, which is much preferable to the colloquial *a* (=he) of Q_2.

31. All the old editions read *win the Lady*. Rowe's correction, *win thee, Lady*, has been adopted without a dissenting voice.

35. *page.* This is Theobald's happy conjecture. All the old editions, followed by Rowe and Pope, have *rage.*

43. *unto;* so Q_2F_1; Q_1 reads *to*, which spoils the metre.

Scene II.

For *Enter Launcelot* the old texts read *Enter the Cloune alone.*

1. *will serve.* It has been suggested that *not* has dropped out of this line. Allen proposes to read *will forbid.* But it seems as if the explanation of Eccles that *will serve* is equivalent to "will have to yield" or "acquiesce" would allow the old text to stand.

4, 5, 8, 9. The Q_2F_1 reading *Iobbe* gives a very queer look to the passage. The compositor of F_3 attempted to set matters right by substituting *Job.* Since Pope, however, the reading of Q_1, *Gobbo*, has been accepted without discussion.

Launcelot. This modern spelling dates from Rowe; Q_1 has *Lancelet*, Q_2F_1 *Launcelet.*

11. *Via* is Rowe's correction for *fia* of QqFf.

16. Q_1 omits *Launcelot.*

23. The *ill* of Q_1 is not defended even by the Cambridge editors, although it was accepted by a long line of authorities from Pope to Johnson. As Furnivall says, "Q_1 misses Lancelot's point, that both conscience and the Fiend are giving good advice, and we *must* have the *well* of Q_2 to match the 'Conscience say I you counsell well' and Lancelot's following the Fiend's advice by budging from Shylock."

24. Of the two nonsensical words *incarnal* Q_1 and *incarnation* Q_2F_1 the latter seems to me somewhat the more complete and happy nonsense.

30. F_1 omits the *but* of Qq.

32. *Commandment*, the reading of F_1Q_2 is generally accepted rather than the *command* of Q_1, which, however, is preferred by the Cambridge editors.

38–39. *try confusions.* So Q_2F_1; the *conclusions* of Q_1 is certainly wrong. Probably the printer was trying to make sense out of Shakespeare's designed nonsense. The phrase,

try conclusions, occurs in *Hamlet* III., iv., 195, where it means "try experiments." But as the Cambridge editors say (Clarendon Press, p. 93), Launcelot would not have given a hard word so correctly.

45. *to;* so Q_2F_1, Q_1 *unto.*

47. *Be.* This is the reading of all the old editions up to F_4. There seems to be no reason for changing it to 'by.' The meaning is perfectly plain and the old form gives a touch of rusticity to Gobbo's speech.

60. The interrogation mark at the close of this line in many modern editions is defended by Dyce on the ground that we have here a repetition of Launcelot's question in l. 52. This, the Cambridge editors say, seems conclusive. But between l. 52 and the present passage occurs Launcelot's affirmation, *we talk of young Master Launcelot* (ll. 66–67). In ll. 59–60, it seems to me, we have a repeated affirmation directly addressed to Gobbo; "*ergo*," (i.e., since the young man in question is my friend) *call him Master Launcelot.* Gobbo's reply, which Dr. Furness thinks a response fitter to a question than to a command, is only a bit of the old man's obstinacy. Instead of yielding to the demand to put a handle to his son's name, he shakes his head and answers as before, *Of Launcelot.* It is quite true, as the Cambridge editors observe, that interrogation marks are frequently omitted in the old texts. They are wanting, for example, in lines 72 and 75 of this scene. But that is hardly a reason for supplying them where they are not needed.

84–85. *in the end.* As far as sense goes there is nothing to choose between this reading of Q_2F_1 and that of Q_1 *at the length*, which is preferred by the Cambridge editors. The majority of editors print *in the end.*

100. *fill-horse.* The *pil horse* of Q_1 is a misprint; *phil horse* in Q_2F_1 a misspelling of this word.

107. Here, as in l. 76, the careful printer of Q_1 supplies the interrogation mark which is wanting in $Q_2Ff_{1\text{-}3}$.

108. *'gree.* Q_2F_1 *gree;* Q_1 *agree.* Euphony seems to demand the former, which is preferred by most modern editors.

129. The dashes in the following lines representing the alternate interruptions of Launcelot and of his father are not found in the old editions, except in l. 145, where Q_1 has a dash after *is*.

165. Q_1 has *ha;* Q_2F_1 *have*.

166. The punctuation of the text is that of Q_1. Q_2F_1 have *head, well:*

168. I omit the comma after *book* in the old texts as likely to confuse the modern reader. The clause *I shall . . . fortune* is the direct object of *swear*. I follow Knight in placing an exclamation mark after fortune. The whole sentence is equivalent to an exclamation, "No man in Italy has a luckier hand than I!"

171. *Aleven*. This old form for *eleven* was, according to Halliwell, a common vulgarism in Shakespeare's day. The careful printer of Q_1 corrected it to *eleven;* the printer of Q_2 set it as two words, *a leven*, in which he was followed by F_1. There is no authority for the Cambridge editors' *a' leven*.

172. *scape*. Here again the Q_1 gives us the full form *escape;* but *scape* suits Launcelot's tongue better. There is no need of supplying an apostrophe before the word (Cambridge editors read *'scape*), which is a perfectly good form as it stands in the Q_2F_1 text.

177. *of an eye*. These words of Q_1 were omitted in Q_2F_1, but were restored to the text by Pope.

183. *where is*. *Where's* of QqFf was expanded to *where is* by Pope *metris causa*.

193. *thou art*. So the Qq. F_1 has *they are*, probably a sophistication of the printer who connected the phrase with *faults* in the preceding line. This error ran through the Ff and Rowe. We have to thank Pope for the restoration to the text of the Qq reading.

194. *take pains*. I accept the suggestion of Dr. Furness and read *pains* for the *pain* of QqFf. The phrase *take pain* occurs but in one other place in Shakespeare (*King Henry VIII*, III. II. 72.), and there as here at the end of a line, where the *s* may easily have been dropped off. See Walker, Critical Examination of the Text of Shakespeare, p. 233 ssq., for instances of

such omissions. The phrase *take pains*, on the other hand, occurs in one form or another eighteen times in Shakespeare.

197. *misconster'd.* I much prefer this form, current in Shakespeare's day, to the *misconstrued* which was substituted for it by Rowe and which most modern editors adopt. *Misconster'd* shows the old pronunciation with the accent on the second syllable and so preserves the rhythm of this line which is lost if we read *misconstrued* with the modern accent.

Scene III.

9. Ff omit *in.*

11. *do.* The reading of QqF$_1$ *doe* was altered in F$_2$ to *did*, and this change has been accepted by most modern editors, apparently for the sake of the joke on the Jew implied in Launcelot's insinuation that some Christian *did* play the rogue and *get*, (*i.e.*, beget) Jessica. There is not, however, the slightest reason for this change, since the reading of the QqF$_1$ makes perfectly good sense, taking *get thee* in the sense of "get thee as a wife." Dr. Furness objects that those who saw no harm in Jessica's theft of her father's money would have seen no knavery in stealing the girl herself; but in the very scene of the elopement Lorenzo says to his friends, "When you shall choose to *play the thieves* for wives." It is, I believe, the duty of a modern editor to free the text from this corruption, which probably took its origin in a play-house 'gag.'

14. *something.* So Qq; Ff have *somewhat.*

Scene IV.

10. *and it shall.* Theobald's alteration of *And* to *An* has been universally accepted. But see note on I., II., 96. If a change from the text of Q$_2$F$_1$ is to be made we should print *if* as in Q$_1$.

10–11. *it shall seem.* So the Qq; F$_1$ *shall it seem.*

23. *you*, omitted in Q$_1$.

Scene V.

1. *shalt.* So the Qq; F$_{1-2}$ *shall.*

4. The question mark of Q$_1$F$_1$ has properly been changed to an exclamation mark by modern editors.

8. Q_1 inserts *that* before *I*, in which it is followed by the Cambridge editors. The reading of Q_2F_1, *tell me I could*, etc., seems more appropriate to Launcelot.

22. I prefer the punctuation of Capell, viz.—after *together* to that of the Cambridge editors, who follow the old texts in printing. *And* in this line is not, I think, equivalent to *if*, but a mere connective joining this speech of Launcelot to his former speech which Shylock had interrupted. This being the case, it is evident that the clause, *and they have conspired together*, is not the protasis of a conditional sentence, but rather a sentence suddenly interrupted, in Launcelot's usual fashion. This interruption should be marked by a dash.

26. *i'the.* Q_2F_1 *ith;* Q_1 *in the.*

27. *in th' afternoon.* This is the reading of Q_1F_1; Q_2 *in thafternoon.* The reading *in the afternoon* adopted by the Cambridge editors occurs for the first time in F_4.

28. *you*, omitted in Q_1.

30. *squealing.* This reading of Q_2F_1 seems a little more appropriate to the music of the fife than the *squeaking* of Q_1, which, nevertheless, has been adopted by many editors from Pope to Delius.

41. Q_1 inserts *a* between *at* and *window.*

43. *Jewës.* Pope's alteration of *Jewes*, which occurs in QqF_{1-2} (Ff_{3-4} *Jew's*) to *Jewess'*, has been almost universally adopted, in spite of the fact that Shakespeare nowhere uses the word *Jewess.* Launcelot addresses Jessica (II. III. 11.) as "most sweet Jew." The change was made by Pope for the sake of the metre. But if the reading of the QqFf *Jewes* is retained and pronounced as two syllables, the metre is preserved.* This old spelling of the possessive case occurs also in the old texts in II. II. 35, 41, and 45. In the proverbial expression quoted by Launcelot the word probably retained the old dissyllabic pronunciation. The word *Jewess*, though not unknown in

* Thus in *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 332, we have

To show his teeth as white as whale's (F_1 Whales) bone,

where the metre shows that *whales* must be pronounced as two syllables.

Shakespeare's day, was of comparatively rare occurrence, while the phrase "worth a Jew's eye" was proverbial. See note p. 118.

47. *and he.* So Qq; F_1 has *but he.*

Scene VI.

2. *make stand.* So the Qq; Ff insert *a*, needlessly, before *stand.*

6. *seal.* So the Qq; Ff wrongly *steale.*

12. The question mark after *first* in Q_1 is omitted by $Q_2F_{1\text{-}2}$.

14. *Younker.* This emendation of Rowe's for the *younger* or *yonger* of QqFf has been very generally received. Dr. Furness holds that it is unnecessary; but *a younger* means a 'disciple' or 'follower,' and in this sense it does not occur in Shakespeare. *Younker*, however, meaning 'stripling'; 'novice,' 'young fool,' occurs in *I. King Henry IV*, III. iii. 92, and *III. King Henry VI*, II. i. 24. The latter passage is so nearly akin in meaning to the one under discussion that we need have no hesitation in believing that Shakespeare used the word *younker* in both.

17. *the prodigal.* So the Qq, making the allusion to the Prodigal Son more pointed than the Ff which read *a prodigal.*

33. *it is.* So the Q_2F_1. Q_1 *'tis.*

44. *are you.* So the Qq. F_1 *you are.*

50. *mo.* So the Qq. F_1 *more.* Shakespeare probably wrote the archaic form and the printer of F_1 altered it.

51. *Gentile.* So $Q_1Ff_{2\text{-}4}$; Q_2F_1 *gentle.* Capell alone of modern editors prints *gentle.* Shakespeare uses *gentle* as a substantive only in the plural.

58. *gentlemen.* So Q_1F_1. Q_2 *gentleman.*

66. This entire line is omitted in Q_1 as well as the name Gratiano (*Gra.*) before the next speech, which is thus put in the mouth of Antonio. This, of course, is a mere printer's error.

Scene VII.

5. *many.* This word is omitted in the Ff.

18. The period after *threatens* was inserted by Rowe. There is no mark of punctuation in this line in QqFf.

34. Capell suggested that the word *her* had dropped out at the end of this line. Dr. Furness pronounces the emendation most certain; "it is not only a repetition of the very phrase two lines before, but it is easy to see that the printer was misled by the 'here' in the line following." It is not, I think, likely that the presence of *here* in l. 34 would lead to the omission of *her* in l. 33. According to Abbott (§ 455) the feminine syllable is seldom a monosyllable in Shakespeare. None of the best modern editors have accepted this emendation.

57. *stamped.* QpFf *stampt.* Rowe's correction for the sake of the metre has been accepted by all subsequent editors.

69. *tombs.* All the old texts read *timber.* Johnson's conjecture that *tombes* in the manuscript was misprinted *timber* has been very generally accepted. Knight and Halliwell attempt to defend the old reading by taking *timber* as a plural noun referring either to a coffin or to the golden box which Morocco has just opened. The phrase *a gilded tomb* appears in Shakespeare's Sonnets, CI. 11.

Scene VIII.

6. *came.* So the Qq. Ff *comes.*

39. *Slubber.* So Q_1Ff. Q_2 *Slumber.*

46. *There.* Dyce's emendation *then*, approved by Dr. Furness, is so plausible that one is almost tempted to put it in the text. *There* in l. 45, referring to Belmont, may have influenced the printer to set *there* in l. 46. Allowing the text to stand, however, we must explain *there* as meaning at that point in his speech.

Scene IX.

7. *you.* So the Qq; Ff *thou.*

48. *peasantry.* So the Q_2 (Q_1 *pezantry*). Ff *pleasantry.*

53. The direction, [*Aside*] was first inserted by Capell.

62. Q_1 omits *is.*

78. *wroath.* It seems better to retain this old spelling of QqFf, both to preserve the rhyme and to prevent the average

reader from confusing the word with the modern *wrath*. It is rather to be identified with *ruth*, in the sense of 'sorrow,' 'misfortune.'

79. *moth*. So Q_1. Q_2F_1 *moath*, indicating the rhyme.

81. *the*. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *their*.

101. The punctuation is that of Rowe. QqF_{1-2} have *Bassanio Lord, love*.

ACT III.

Scene I.

7. *gossip Report*. Q_2 *gossip report;* Q_1F_1 *gossip's report*. It is unusual to find Q_1F_1 agreeing against Q_2; but here the context plainly shows that Q_2 has the correct reading.

9. *as lying a*. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *as a lying*.

27. *knew*. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *know*.

40. *and blood*. So Q_1F_1; Q_2 *and my blood*.

45. *any loss at*. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *at losse a sea*, for *a loss at sea*.

60. *his reason*. So the Qq; F_1 *the reason*.

72. *humility? Revenge*. So Rowe. QqFf *humility, revenge?* A similar misplacing of the question mark in QqFf occurs l. 74.

93. *would she were*. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *O would she were*, followed by Pope and many eighteenth-century editors.

95. *news of them? Why, so*. The punctuation is that of the Cambridge editors. Q_1 reads *them, why so:* Q_2F_1 *them, why so?* Dr. Furness seems to approve of the question mark after *why so*. But it seems as if the phrase was equivalent to our modern "why, there it is," or "there are you."

96. *what's spent*. So the Qq; Ff *how much is spent*. Dr. Furness believes *thou* in this line to be a misprint for *then*, which appears in F_{2-4}. A few editors print *then*.

100. *on my*. So Q_1; F_1Q_2 *a my*.

but of. So Q_1; F_1Q_2 *but a*.

104. The interrogation point after *what* is due to Theobald.

112. *here? in Genoa?* QqFf, with slight variations of spelling, read *here in Genowa*. Rowe substituted *where* for *here*, and

inserted the interrogation marks, and his change has been universally adopted. Dr. Furness thinks that the old reading may possibly be defended, but his explanation seems a trifle forced. I have ventured to leave the old text, only inserting the interrogation marks with Rowe. For my interpretation of the passage see note, p. 128.

113–114. *in one night.* So Q_1; Q_2F_1 *one night.* Most editors prefer the latter reading, but the former seems to me the clearer and more rhythmical.

119. *to.* So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *unto.*

swear he. So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *swear that he.*

122. *of it.* So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *on't.*

126. *turquoise.* Rowe's correction for *Turkies*, QqF_1.

134. *go Tubal.* So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *go go Tubal*, which some editors prefer.

Scene II.

11. *then I am.* So all the old texts except Q_1 which reads *I am then.* This reading has been followed by the Cambridge editors on account of their preference for Q_1. The weight of authority, however, is on the other side, and the rhythm of the Q_2 is decidedly better.

17. *if.* So the Qq. F_1 *of.*

19. *Puts.* So both Qq and F_1. This 'Northern plural' is so frequent in Shakespeare that there is no need of changing it, as the Cambridge editors do in this instance, to the modern form. It certainly is inconsistent in them to do so since in II. I. 11. they retain the old plural *hath* against the authority of Q_2F_1.

23. *draw it out.* So Q_2F_1; Q_1 *draw out.*

33. *do.* So the Qq. F_1 *doth.*

61–62. Q_1 reads:

Live thou, I live with much more dismay
To view the fight, then thou that mak'st the fray.

Q_2:

Live thou, I live with much much more dismay,
I view the fight, then thou that mak'st the fray.

F_1 follows Q_2, except that like Q_1 it omits the second *much* and the comma after *dismay*. Omissions of repeated words are, as Walker (v. 2. p. 141) has shown, far from infrequent. Nearly all modern editors follow, with a change of punctuation similar to that suggested by Rowe,* the text of Q_2. Dr. Furness points out that as the texts stand in the Qq, the reading of Q_1 gives a meaning which can scarcely be said of that of Q_2. I fancy, however, that the text of Q_2 is nearer to Shakespeare's manuscript, which we may easily believe to have been deficient in the matter of punctuation. The printer, or proof-reader, of Q_1 corrected, not by changing the punctuation, as he should have done, but by altering *I* to *To*. I take this passage to be another distinct proof of the superiority of Q_2 to Q_1 in what Furnivall calls "phrase-betternesses."

66. *Reply, reply.* In the old texts these words are printed in the margin. They were omitted altogether by Rowe; Hanmer, Dr. Johnson, and some later editors have taken them as a stage direction. They are, however, unquestionably a part of the song, as may easily be seen by reading it aloud without these words. The Cambridge editors say that if we read with the Qq *eye* in l. 67, the phrase *Reply, reply* is required by the rhyme. See note below.

67. *eyes.* So the Ff. Qq have *eye;* but the rhyme scheme of the first half of the song seems to call for a corresponding arrangement in the second half.

71. *I'll begin it.* Printed in Roman letters in Qf and Ff, possibly to indicate a solo or a spoken part, the rest of the song being in italics.

81. *vice.* QqF_1 agree in the misprint *voice.* The correction of F_2 has been universally accepted.

82. *mark.* Omitted in Q_1.

93. *makes.* So the Ff; Qq *maketh.* Pope s change to *make* was due to his ignorance of Elizabethan grammar and should

* Rowe puts a semicolon after *I live*, which is perhaps better than the Cambridge colon.

not appear, as it usually does, in modern editions. For the grammar see Abbott, *Shakespearian Grammar*, § 247.

97. *guiled.* So QqF$_1$; F$_{2-4}$ *guilded;* following which Rowe, Pope, Hanmer, and Capell read *gilded. Guiled* is probably correct, since we have numerous examples in Shakespeare of a passive participle formed directly from a noun. Thus *he childed as I fathered. Lear* III. vi. 117. See Abbott, § 294.

99. *Veiling an Indian; beauty, in a word.* This is probably the most difficult passage in the *Merchant of Venice.* Qq and F$_1$ read:

Vailing an Indian beauty; In a word,

If the old text is to be retained *beauty* must be used ironically and the emphasis laid on *Indian.* Indian beauties, as has been repeatedly remarked, are not up to the European standard. But as the Cambridge editors (Clarendon Press *Merchant of Venice*, p. 108) rightly say, this explanation is not tenable considering that *beauteous* has just been used, l. 98, in its natural sense.

Beginning with Hanmer various proposals have been made to substitute a word for *beauty* on the hypothesis that this word was due to the error of a printer who may have been misled by the preceding *beauteous.* Some of these proposals are here given:

dowdy,	Hanmer.
gipsy,	Walker.
favour,	Lettsom.
beldam,	Cambridge editors.
bosom,	Wright (of the Cambridge editors).
suttee,	Cowden Clarke.
body,	Bailey.
mummy,	Greet.

None of these suggestions, however, has satisfied anybody but the man who proposed it.

There is, however, another method of correcting the passage. We may let *beauty* stand and alter the punctuation. Thus

Theobald conjectured in a letter to Warburton (Nichols' Illustrations, v. 2. p. 307–8) that we might read,

Veiling an Indian.—Beauty's, in a word, .

He did not, however, venture to print this in his edition of Shakespeare. A somewhat similar conjecture was made by Forsyth in the Inverness Advertiser, 1867, viz.,

Veiling an Indian: beauty, in a word's

J. P. Collier in his second edition introduced on the authority of his "old corrector" the reading:—

Veiling an Indian: beauty, in a word,

It is probably the dubious origin of this conjecture that has prevented its general acceptation. The fierce war which sprang up about the genuineness of the manuscript notes in Collier's copy of F_2 hindered a fair discussion of their intrinsic merits, and the final verdict that these notes were forgeries naturally tended to throw them out of court altogether. But if we consider the proposed change simply as an emendation suggested by Collier we shall, I venture to believe, find it more satisfactory than any other hitherto suggested.

In the first place, let us consider in what the change consists. The semicolon after *beauty* in Qq Ff is altered to a colon—and even this is not necessary—and placed after *Indian*. Further the capital '*I*' of *In a word* is changed (as in all modern editions) to '*i*.' Now the punctuation and capitalization of the old texts are constantly and necessarily altered by modern editors. They are, in all probability, not the work of Shakespeare, but represent the judgment, or the caprice, of his printers. Thus in ll. 61–62 of this scene, a change very similar to that here proposed was made by Rowe and has been generally accepted. See note p. 176.

What, then, is gained by this trifling alteration of the old text? First of all we secure a passage presenting not the slightest diffi-

culty. If the lines had originally read as Collier's emendation leaves them, it is certain that not one of the numerous substitutes for *beauty* would have been suggested. Commentators would at most have made a note upon Indian, to the effect that the hue of the dark-skinned Indian offended the Elizabethan sense of beauty which held that only the fair (blonde) were fair* (beautiful), and that *Indian* in this passage was probably used in the same sense as *Ethiop* in *Love's Labor Lost*, IV. iii. 118.

No doubt the line in *Romeo and Juliet*, I. v. 48,

Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear

would have been pointed out as a parallel passage. Certainly no editor would have felt called on to obelize this passage as one incapable of explanation or emendation, as the Cambridge editors do in the Globe edition.

Secondly, it is worth noting that this clear and easy sense is gained by expunging, not indeed from the text, but from the clause, the superfluous word *beauty*. There is nothing denoted in the phrase *Indian beauty* that is not implied in the word *Indian*.† Brae's assertion (Notes and Queries, 1852, v. 1. p. 483) that the word *beauty* is necessarily attached to *Indian* as designative of sex, may be answered by the statement that Shakespeare in the instance from *Love's Labor Lost* cited above uses *Ethiop* without any qualification for negress. Nor, indeed, is it absolutely necessary that we suppose an Indian woman to be indicated here. The idea in the poet's mind is that a beauteous scarf may veil a dark repellent countenance, male or female, it matters not which. It seems to me that in this excision of a superfluous word, Collier's emendation is as

* Bassanio, the lover of the fair-haired Portia, would naturally entertain this opinion.

† "Whenever Shakespeare makes mention of *Indian*, he almost invariably does so in terms of disparagement. 'Savages and men of Ind' are coupled together in the *Tempest* (II. ii. 61); in *Love's Labor's Lost* we read of 'a rude and savage man of Ind' (IV. iii. 222); in *Othello* (V. ii. 347) 'base' is the epithet attributed to him; in *King Henry VIII.* the allusion is disgustingly contemptuous."—Perring: Hard Knots in Shakespeare, p. 123.

superior to the old text as is the reading of Q_2, *would*, to that of Q_1, *would have*, in I. iii. 66 of this play. See note, p. 164.

It is objected, however, by Brae and by the Cambridge editors, that the sense of the following clause, *in a word, the seeming* truth, etc., is spoiled by the intrusion of a new subject, *beauty*. But *beauty* is, after all, not so much a new subject as a synonym for the old subject *ornament*, i. e. 'outer adornment.' In l. 88 *beauty* certainly has this meaning. Schmidt * (Shakespeare-Lexicon) gives 'ornament' as one of the meanings of 'beauty' and cites *Hamlet*, II. ii. 319 as an example. In Sonnet CVI. l. 3 *beauty* may perhaps be taken as equivalent to 'poetic ornament.' One of the definitions of 'beauty' in the New English Dictionary is 'ornament,' 'grace,' 'charm.' In short, I do not see that any new subject is introduced or that any violence is done to the sense by shifting *beauty* to the beginning of the final clause.

Finally, I would call attention to the fact, unnoticed so far as I am aware by previous commentators, that the proposed emendation brings about a distinct improvement of the rhythm. In the old text the cæsura falls after the seventh syllable; in the emended line it falls after the fifth. Heaven forbid that Shakespeare should be deprived of his liberty of placing the cæsura after the seventh syllable. But the fact is that in his earlier plays this is a comparatively rare occurrence. As Conrad (Jahrbuch v. XXXI, pp. 345–347) has shown the tendency to place the cæsura in the latter part of the verse developed gradually with Shakespeare. In the *Merchant of Venice* the usual place for the cæsura is after the fourth or fifth syllable.†

* It may be noted in passing that Schmidt though defining 'beauty' in the line under discussion as 'a beautiful person' puts a question mark after the passage to denote his dissatisfaction with the old text.

† 261 lines in this play out of 1,000 examined by Conrad have the cæsura after the fourth syllable, 259 after the fifth, 182 after the sixth, and only 134 after the seventh.

In this speech of Bassanio's there have been already four, or possibly five, instances (ll. 77, 81, 88, 94, and perhaps 98) in which the cæsura falls after the seventh syllable. This is already somewhat in excess of the normal number,—an excess which would be considerably heightened if in this line, too, the cæsura occurred in that position.

Delicate points of rhythm are not, of course, to be settled by a mere tabulation of percentages. I have quoted Conrad only to show that, other things being equal, we might expect the cæsura to fall after *Indian* rather than after *beauty*. But I would further call attention to the fact that the old text gives us a very weak and unemphatic second half-line, i. e. the phrase *in a word*. Compare this for a moment with the strong second half-lines of ll. 77, 81, 88 and 94, and it appears a lame and impotent conclusion. The sudden recoil of the cæsura from its position after the seventh syllable in l. 99 to its place after the fourth in l. 100 in the old text does not appear in the emended version; nor is such a sudden recoil to be noted in the other passages in this speech where a cæsura occurs after the seventh syllable. I believe if the two versions be read aloud, every one familiar with Shakespeare's rhythmical effects and not unalterably prejudiced in favor of the old text will be inclined to accept the correction on rhythmical grounds alone.

101. *Therefore thou.* So Q_1; Q_2F_1, *Therefore then thou.*

102. *fcod.* So Q_2F_1; Q_1, *foole.*

103. *pale.* It has been frequently proposed to change this word to *stale*. In *Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii. 79 the Qq read *pale*, which F_1 corrects to *stale*. This, however, is hardly a sufficient reason for altering the text here, where the meaning is perfectly plain.

106. *plainness.* I make bold to receive into the text of this line the conjecture of Warburton which was first printed by Theobald and which has received the approbation of Dr. Furness. It is plain, I think, that Bassanio would not speak of both silver (l. 103) and lead (l. 106) as *pale*. And although *pale* is a common epithet of lead, it is an unsuitable epithet in

this case, since it is not in keeping with the rest of the clause. Paleness is a sign of fear; but the lead is spoken of as threatening. The only feeling that paleness can move would be compassion; the lead on the other hand persuades Bassanio by something more effective than eloquence. This something is well expressed in the word *plainness*, i. e. 'frankness,' 'openness.' The inscription on the leaden casket is certainly frank and unpromising; it might almost be called threatening. Yet this very frankness moves Bassanio more than the flattering eloquence of the inscriptions on the other caskets. We feel the need of an antithesis between *eloquence* and that quality of lead which moves Bassanio, and *plainness* supplies this, while *paleness* certainly does not. The statement of Farmer that Shakespeare had already made an antithesis between *paleness* and *eloquence* in *Midsummer Night's Dream* (V. i. 93–104), is not correct, as may be seen by a reference to the passage. The antithesis there is between the "modesty of fearful duty" and the "rattling tongue of saucy eloquence."

112. *rain.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *range.* Qq_{3-4} have *reine*, which is preferred by some editors, among them Dr. Furness. The Cambridge editors have wavered in their opinion. In the Cambridge edition of 1863 they print *rein;* in the Clarendon Press edition (1874) they print *rain*, but say (p.108) that *rein* rests on higher authority; in the new Cambridge edition they print *rain.* Meanwhile *rein* stands in their Globe edition.

The phrase *rain in measure* may very well be explained as equivalent to *pour down in moderation.* Cf. *1. King Henry IV.*, V. i. 48—"It rain'd down fortune showering on your head." The *reine* of the later Qq is probably meant for *raine*, since, as Dr. Johnson noted, these words were not in those times distinguished by regular orthography. And the phrase *in measure*, which follows so appropriately after *rain*, becomes very awkward after the proposed correction.

117. *whether.* So the Ff; the Qq have *whither.*

122. *t'entrap.* F_1; Q_1 *t'intrap*, showing the pronunciation; Q_2 *tyntrap.*

145. *peals.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *pearles.*

149. *see me, lord.* So the Qq; F_1 *You see my lord.*

154. *more rich;* In Qq Ff these words are printed at the beginning of the next line. This gives an extremely awkward rhythm. Malone, followed by many modern editors, among them the Cambridge editors, prints *more rich* as a separate line. There is, however, no necessity for this, as it seems plain that the words have simply been transferred in the old copies from the end of one line to the beginning of another. By restoring them to the end of l. 154 we get an Alexandrine such as is not uncommon in this play.

159. *sum of—something.* This is a much-disputed passage. The Qq read *sum* (Q_1 *summe*, Q_2 *sume*) *of something;* the Ff *sum of nothing.* Editors are about equally divided as to which reading is to be preferred. In the *Clarendon Press*, the Cambridge editors introduce a dash * between *of* and *something.* Dr. Furness declares that this dash should precede either of the readings; and it certainly adds to the effectiveness of the speech. On the whole, I prefer the Qq reading, since it seems absurd to use the phrase *term in gross*, i. e. 'speak of as a whole,' 'sum up,' after *nothing.*

163. *Happiest of all is that.* So all the old texts and most modern editors. Collier on the authority of his "old corrector" changes *is* to *in*, an emendation which has received the approval of Dr. Furness. But the passage makes good sense as it stands (See note, p. 134), and it hardly seems worth while to make any alteration. At the same time I freely confess that *in* seems to me a better reading and one which I should unhesitatingly follow if I had found it in either of the Qq or in F_1.

185. *Bassanio's dead.* So Q_2 F_1; in Q_1 the careful printer has expanded it into *Bassanio is dead.* This reading, if *Bassanio* be pronounced in full, would give us an Alexandrine. Such a line would not be altogether out of place here as closing the dialogue

* Apparently they repented of this dash, for it does not appear in the Cambridge ed. of 1891.

between the lovers; but it is probable that the contracted form, which was certainly that employed upon the stage, is the correct reading.

199. The punctuation in the text is that of the Clarendon Press edition.

QqF_1 read

You lou'd, I lou'd for intermission,

The change in the text is due to Theobald, who, however, placed a colon after *I loved.* It has seemed better simply to shift the comma from the end of the line and set it after *I loved.* In the Cambridge edition the editors abandon the reading given in the Clarendon Press and read

You loved, I loved for intermission.

This punctuation renders the passage rather difficult of explanation, since it leaves *pertains* in the following line without a subject, unless the phrase *no more* be so construed. Professor Gummere, who follows the Cambridge punctuation, explains the passage as follows: "You loved: I loved for pastime",—taking *for* in its frequent sense of 'for fear of,' 'to avert'; and renders l. 200: "I owe my wife as much to you as to my own efforts."

A comparison of this awkward explanation with the simplicity of the passage as it runs according to the punctuation in the text should, I think, be sufficient to show that Theobald's punctuation and interpretation are right.

It might further be noted that if *intermission* is taken with *I loved*, the result is a contrast between Bassanio and Gratiano and an almost contemptuous reference to Nerissa, which can hardly have been intended by Shakespeare. "You loved," Gratiano says, "I loved by way of passing the time." This was not the way in which Bassanio loved, and it can hardly be supposed that even Gratiano would refer to his earnest courtship (ll. 203–204) as a mere pastime.

201. *Caskets.* So Q_2 Ff; Q_1 *casket.*

209. *it is, so.* So the Qq; Ff *it is so, so.*

220. *Salerio.* So all the old texts. Many modern editors believing that it is a misprint either for Salerino or Salanio have altered it to one of these names, mainly on the ground that Shakespeare would be violating dramatic propriety by introducing a new character so late in the play. Dr. Furness agrees with this and holds that *Salerio* is most likely a misprint for *Salanio.* But it was not at all unusual for Shakespeare to introduce a new character, particularly one of so little importance, late in the play. Thus in *Macbeth*, Seyton appears for the first time in Act V. scene ii; in *Othello*, Lodovico appears for the first time in Act IV. scene i., and Gratiano in Act V. scene i. It is quite true, as Dr. Furness points out, that the number of actors in Shakespeare's company was very small, but can such a scholar have forgotten that "one man in his time plays many parts." I agree with the Cambridge editors in retaining *Salerio* here and placing his name among the *dramatis personae.*

233. The stage direction was supplied by Theobald.

237. The stage direction, omitted in the Cambridge edition, is found in all the old texts.

Q_1 He opens
Q_2 open
F_1 Opens
} the letter.

238. *yon.* So Q_1; Q_2 Ff *yond.*

255–6. The punctuation of these lines in the text follows that of F_1 with the exception of substituting a dash for the old-fashioned colon after *veins.* The punctuation of the Cambridge editors by placing a comma after *you* seems to sever the object-clause from its verb, and the substitution of a semicolon for a comma after *gentleman* is hardly necessary.

268. *Hath.* So all the old texts. Rowe altered to *Have*, in which he has been followed by most modern editors.

316. The stage direction was inserted by Rowe. Q_1 gives all to l. 324 inclusive to Portia.

Q_2F_1 omit *Bassanio* before the letter but show by printing *Por.* before line 324 that the omission was unintentional.

321. *might but see.* So the Qq; Ff omit *but.*

death. So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 have a colon after *death.* The suggestion of C. Kemble that a period should be set after *I* and a new sentence begun with *if* (l. 320) is that of an actor rather than of a true critic of the text.

328. *nor.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 has *no* which is received by many editors. It is easier to see how a letter could be dropped from *nor* under the influence of *no* in the preceding line than how the *nor* of Q_2 should have appeared in the text unless by design.

Scene III.

2. *lent.* So the Qq; Ff have *lends*, which is preferred by Knight, Hallowell, Rolfe and others; but the combined authority of the Qq outweighs that of F_1.

26–29. There has been much dispute over the meaning of this passage. Theobald proposed to set a comma after *law* (l. 26), a full stop after *Venice* (l.28) and to read *'Twill* for *Will* (l.29). In this he has been followed by Capell, Knight, Staunton and others. The passage, then, would mean: "The Duke cannot deny the course of law by reason of the commodious privileges which strangers have in Venice. If it (i. e. the course of law) be denied, it (i. e. the denial) will impeach the justice of the state." As I believe the old text to be capable of a perfectly clear meaning (see note, p. 137), I have followed Malone and the Cambridge editors in retaining the old punctuation, except in substituting a semicolon for the old comma after *state.*

29. *the state.* So all old texts except Q_1 which has *his state.* The Cambridge editors are almost alone in following Q_1.

Scene IV.

21. *cruelty.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *misery*, which the Cambridge editors adopt. Dr. Furness prefers *misery.* "Is it not too soon," he asks, "for Portia to know the full depth of Shylock's 'cruelty'?

The utter bankruptcy of a Royal Merchant is *misery* enough." But Portia had heard Jessica say that Shylock had sworn to Tubal and to Chus that he would sooner have Antonio's flesh than fifty times the value of the bond. This, I think, might well convince Portia of Shylock's *hellish cruelty*.

23. *hear other things.* This is Theobald's emendation, generally adopted since his time, for the *heere other things* of the old texts, which make *other things* the object of *commit* in l. 24.

32. *we will.* So all the old texts but Q_1, which has *will we.* Most modern editors prefer the former reading; but the Cambridge editors and Rolfe follow Q_1.

40. *So fare you well.* So all the old texts but Q_1 which has *And so fare well.* Most modern editors prefer the reading in the text, but the Cambridge editors follow Q_1.

44. *fare you well.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *farewell.*

46. *honest-true.* The hyphen was inserted by Dyce.

49. *Padua.* Theobald's emendation for *Mantua* which appears in all the old texts, but which cannot be right. Cf. IV. i. 109, 119.

53. *traject.* Rowe's emendation for the *tranect* of the old texts. I see no reason for retaining *tranect*, a word which does not occur in English or any other language, when it is so easy to suppose that the printers simply made a mistake in an unfamiliar word. *Traject* is a word used by Coryat as an English form of the Italian *traghetto*, the word still used in Venice for a common, or public, ferry. Yet the Cambridge editors and many others print *tranect.*

63. *Accoutred.* So all the old texts but Q_1, which reads *appareld.* Most editors prefer *accoutred*, but Dr. Furness puts in a plea for the Q_1 reading on the ground that if Portia had in mind the Doctor's cap and gown which Bellario was to send her, she would hardly speak of them as *accoutrements.* It seems to me, however, that we have here a trace of Shakespeare's own revising hand. He first wrote *appareld*, and then on revising the play noted that this word did not suit the following allusion to the dagger and the thousand raw tricks which

Portia was about to assume, and so he altered it to the more appropriate *accoutred.*

Scene V.

3. *you.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *ye*, which the Cambridge editors follow. Strictly speaking, *ye* cannot be used as an objective, but the old distinction between *ye* and *you* was neglected by Shakespeare, and, at any rate, we need not look for accurate grammatical distinctions in the talk of Launcelot Nevertheless I prefer to follow the better authority of Q_2.

5. *be of.* So the F_1; both Qq have *be a*, which is, no doubt, Launcelot's pronunciation of *of.*

35. *there's.* So both Qq; F_1 *there is.*

75. *cheer'st.* So F_1 following Q_2 *cherst.* Q_1 has *far'st*, which was adopted by all eighteenth century editors, from Pope to Johnson. Furnivall (Forewords p. v.) says that here Q_2 "surely recovers a Shakspere word." Dr. Furness, on the other hand, regards *cherst* with suspicion as a probable misprint for *farst.* This is the only instance in Shakespeare of *cheer* used intransitively, but phrases quoted in the New English Dictionary show that this use was common in his day. Thus Greene writes, "How cheer you, gentleman"; and Drayton, "Aske him how he cheeres."

82–83. These two lines vary in all the old texts and have given the commentators much trouble

Q_1 reads

> And if on earth he do not *meane it, then*
> *In* reason, etc.

Q_2

> And if on earth he do not *meane it, it*
> *in* reason, etc.

F_1

> And if on earth he do not *meane it, it*
> *Is* reason

The Cambridge editors say: (Clarendon Press, p. 115) "There is some corruption in this passage for which no satisfactory

emendation has been proposed"; and in the Globe edition they obelize the passage. The difficulty lies in the word *mean*, for which various explanations have been proposed. Of these Dr. Furness declares that of Capell emphatically the true interpretation: *mean* = 'observe the mean,' 'enjoy blessings moderately.' To this, however, it may be objected that while such an interpretation is possible, it is not in keeping with the context. Bassanio enjoys in his wife the blessings of heaven on earth; would Dr. Furness interpret the rest of the passage, "and if he do not enjoy these blessings with moderation he should never come to heaven"? Surely this is to identify the Golden Mean of Greek philosophy with the Golden Rule of the Gospel as a means of salvation. A second interpretation of *mean*, adopted by Rolfe, makes it equivalent to *intend;* but when we ask *intend what?* we are referred back as far as l. 65 to the phrase *live an upright life.* This is very awkward.

Mr. Orson (Temple edition, p. 129) suggests that *mean* = 'aim at.' In this case *it* would refer to *heaven* in the preceding line. The line cited by him from Herbert's *Church Porch*

Scorns his first bed of dirt and *means* the sky

is so close a parallel that I believe we may accept this as a satisfactory solution. See note, p. 141.

Various alterations of this passage have been proposed, of which that of Pope, *merit it*, for *mean it*, is the most plausible, and has been accepted by Theobald, Johnson, and others.

94. *howsoe'er.* So Q_1; Q_2 *how so mere*, F_1 *how som ere.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.

22. *exacts.* So the Qq; Ff *exact'st.* I much prefer to believe that Shakespeare was guilty of the grammatical inaccuracy of the Qq text, than that he perpetrated such a jaw-breaking

word as the Ff give us. See Abbott (§ 340) for a number of instances where, for the sake of euphony, Shakespeare changes the termination *est* into *s*.

25. *human.* Q_1 Ff *humane;* Q_2 *humaine.* The modern spelling, *human*, is unknown to Shakespeare.

31. *flint.* So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 *flints.*

36. *Sabbath.* So Q_1 Ff; Q_2 *Sabaoth.* The latter is not unlikely to have been Shakespeare's word, as *Sabbath* and *Sabaoth* were confused as late as Dr. Johnson's day. The phrase 'Lord God of Sabaoth' which occurs in the *Te Deum* probably gave rise to this confusion.

50–51. This is another of the much-debated passages in the text. The reading of the old texts, with one slight variation in spelling, is identical:

> Cannot containe their urine for affection.
> Masters (Q_2 *Maisters*) of passion swayes it to the moode

The punctuation adopted in the text is that suggested by Thirlby in a letter to Theobald. Thirlby thought, however, that *Maisters* might be a mistake for *mistress*, which is sometimes spelled *maistres*. Capell printed *mistress* and his alteration has been adopted by the Cambridge editors.

The old text is undoubtedly corrupt, but the change necessary to correct it is so slight that we need not fear to make it. The faulty punctuation of the old editions has already been commented on, and Walker (v. 1, p. 233 seq.) has pointed out so many instances of an interpolated *s* that I think we may safely change *masters* to *master*. On the other hand, I see no reason whatever to adopt Capell's *mistress;* the instances cited by Dr. Abbott (p. 481, N. 10) in regard to the confusion of *masters* and *mistress* prove nothing.

56. *a woolen bag-pipe.* So all the old texts, and since *woolen* probably refers to the covering of the bag, there is no reason why it should not stand. But numerous alterations have been made, such as *wooden*, *wauling*, *swollen*, *bollen*, etc

Even the Cambridge editors obelize the passage in the Globe edition.

58. The punctuation of the text is that of Q_1; Q_2 F_1 have no punctuation mark within the line. Dr. Furness prefers the punctuation of F_4, viz. the comma after *himself* instead of after *offend;* and this seems to help the flow of the line. But the antithesis is more clearly brought out by the old punctuation.

65. *answer.* So Q_1 Ff; Q_2 *answers*, which was at first adopted by the Cambridge and still appears in the Globe edition, although not in the Cambridge edition of 1891. The Q_2 reading gives another instance of the interpolated *s*.

66. *things.* So Qq F_1; F_{2-4} *thing*, which was followed by most eighteenth century editors.

73. *you may.* So Q_1; Q_2 begins the line with *well;* Ff have *Or even* instead of *you may.*

74. *why he hath made.* So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 omit. But certain copies of Q_2 in the British Museum have the same reading as Q_1.

bleat. So F_1; Qq *bleake.* This is probably the worst passage in Q_2 but Dr. Furnivall has shown that it was corrected in going through the press and that some copies of this edition give the lines correctly.

75. *mountain pines.* So F_1; Qq *mountain of pines.*

77. *fretten.* So the Qq; Ff *fretted*, which many editors prefer. *Fretten* was probably Shakespeare's word.

79. *what's harder.* So the Qq; Ff *what harder.*

81. *moe.* So the Qq; Ff *more.* Here as in l. 77 the older form is probably Shakespeare's word.

110. *messenger.* So the Qq; Ff *messengers.*

128. *inexorable.* Qq Ff_{1-2} *inexecrable;* Ff_{3-4} *inexorable.* Most editors follow the reading of the later folios. The Cambridge editors, Knight, and White, retain *inexecrable.* Dr. Murray has pointed out (*N. E. D.*, *sub* 'inexecrable') that in the only other place in which *inexecrable* occurs in English (Constable, *Diana*, Sonnet I of Decade VIII) we have a palpable misprint for *inexorable.* The sonnet is an encouragement to a lover to per-

severe in spite of the obstinacy of his lady, since perseverance will lead to success;

> Though she protests the faithfullest severity
> Inexecrable beauty is inflicting;
> Kindness, in time, will pity your sincerity.

It is worth noting also that these sonnets of Constable's were printed in 1594 by James Roberts. Possibly the same compositor who made the mistake in 1594 repeated it in 1600. It is time, I think, that the impossible word *inexecrable* should be withdrawn from the text of Shakespeare.

136. *lay'st.* The Qq Ff read *layest*, which was of course contracted in pronunciation.

142. *cureless.* So the Qq; Ff *endless.* All modern editors follow the Qq; but Dr. Furness is by no means sure that it is the better word. It seems to me that the phrase *repair thy wit* demands *cureless*, i. e. 'incurable,' rather than *endless.*

144. *to.* So the Qq; Ff *in.* Only Rowe and Pope follow the Ff.

169. *Came.* So the Ff; Qq *Come*, which the Cambridge editors adopt, although admitting (Clarendon Press, p. 118) that the Ff are perhaps right. Portia's answer, *I did*, shows that the question must have been in the past tense. Probably *come* in the preceding line was responsible for the mistake in the Qq.

180. *do you not?* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *do ye not?*

204. *court.* So the Qq; Ff *course.*

220. *precedent.* So the Qq; Ff *president*, an alternative spelling of the word.

224. *I do.* So the Qq; Ff *do I.*

255–256. These two lines from *It is* to *the flesh* are printed as one in the old texts. Capell made the change, which has been followed by nearly all modern editors Dr. Furness, however, characterizes it as peculiarly unhappy and would prefer to print *It is so* as one line, supplying the defect in the metre by a pause. In this case, however, the same device must be adopted after *I have them ready*, which by Dr. Furness's arrangement would also

become an imperfect line. The truth is that the rhythm of this passage is conversational rather than strictly metrical.

258. *do.* So the Qq; Ff *should*, which Knight and most of the eighteenth century editors prefer.

259. *Is it so nominated in the bond?* So the Qq; Ff_{1-3} *It is not nominated in the bond?* Dr. Furness says he cannot decide whether it is better to read this, despite the interrogation mark, as an assertion with the Ff. or as a question with the Qq. But surely, even if the interrogation mark of the early folios did not point to a simple printer's transposition of the first two words of the sentence rather than to an assertion, the effect of an interrogative sentence, addressed by Shylock to Portia with a hypocritical pretence of desiring to know the truth, is much more impressive than that of an affirmation. The affirmation comes below (l. 262), after Shylock has finished his pretence of examining the bond.

263. *You, Merchant.* So the Qq; Ff *Come Merchant*, which most editors adopt as the smoother reading. The reading of the Qq, however, is a little more impressive and should, I think, be retained.

272. There have been many efforts to mend the supposed defective metre of this line. *Misery* is certainly not to be accented on the second syllable, as the Cambridge editors (Clarendon Press, p. 121) suggest. The example they cite there to show that *misery* may be so pronounced,

> And buss thee as thy wife. Misery's love
> (*K. J.*, *III.* iv. 35)

shows nothing of the sort, but only presents a trochee instead of an iamb after the cæsura, a not unusual inversion. Professor Gummere suggests that if we dwell (with the so-called hovering accent) on the words *of such misery* we can bring the line within bounds. This seems better than to insert an *a* before *misery* as is done by Ff_{2-4}, an evident correction of the compositor *metris causa*.

277. *love.* So all the old texts. Collier suggested *lover*

on the ground that *love* in the sense of *lover* is uncommon with Shakespeare. But compare *Venus and Adonis*, l. 867.

And yet she hears no tidings of her love.

Cf. also *M. of V.*, II. vi. 28 and V. i. 22 and 170. To read *lover* and thus give the line a feminine ending would, I think, distinctly impair the force of the passage.

278. *Repent not you.* So the Ff; Qq *Repent out you*, which the Cambridge editors prefer on the ground that Antonio would surely wish his friend to regret his loss. But they forget that Shakespeare himself wrote to his friend:

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the sullen surly bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell.

The sentiment of the whole sonnet (LXXI) is exactly that of Antonio in this passage, And the repetition of the phrase *repent not* in two successive lines is very much in Shakespeare's earlier manner. Most editors follow the Ff.

281. *instantly.* So all the old texts but Q_1, which reads *presently.* The Cambridge editors are almost alone in printing the reading of Q_1.

286. *ay, sacrifice.* Pope's correction for the *I sacrifice* of the old texts.

290. *who.* So the Qq; Ff *whom.*

308. *Take then.* So the Qq; Ff *Then take.*

327. *be it but.* So the Qq; Ff *be it*, which Dr. Furness prefers on rhythmical grounds, objecting to the 'cacophony' of *be 't but.* Most editors follow the Qq.

334. *thee.* So the Ff, followed by all editors except Capell and the Cambridge editors, who prefer the Qq *you. Thee* seems much more emphatic. Compare *T. N.*, III. i. 48–9, "If thou thou'st him some thrice it shall not be amiss," or Coke to Raleigh, "I thou thee, thou traitor." For this insulting

use of *thou* see Abbott §233. It is possible, however, that *thee* is an actor's alteration which crept into F_1.

339. *He shall.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *and shall.*

344. *so taken.* So Qq; F_1 *taken so.*

346. *longer question.* So Q_2 Ff; Q_1 *longer heere in question.* Dr. Furness says that except for the metre the Q_1 reading seems preferable, and if *question* be pronounced as a trisyllable and *Tarry, Jew* be regarded as an interjectional line the metre is smooth enough. I am inclined to think that this was the way in which Shakespeare first wrote the line, and then, seeing that the pause, necessary after the short line *Tarry, Jew*, spoiled the effect, for surely there should be no long pause after these words, he corrected it by dropping out the unnecessary *heere in.* I prefer a semicolon after *Jew*, as Capell has it, to the colon of the Cambridge editors. The old texts have only a comma here.

349. *an.* So Q_2 Ff; Q_1 *any.*

360. *against.* So Q_2 Ff; Q_1 *gainst*, which compels us to read *contrivéd.* As Shakespeare gradually ceased to use the accented termination for the past participle, it looks as if Q_1 here represented his first thought and Q_2 his correction.

368. *spirits.* So Q_1, followed by the Cambridge editors. Most editors prefer the *spirit* of Q_2 Ff, which seems to me a little awkward, whereas *difference of our spirits* is exactly paralleled by *difference of old Shylock and Bassanio* (II. v. 2).

398. In Q_2 this speech is carelessly assigned to Shylock.

shalt thou. So the Qq; Ff *thou shalt.*

400. *not the font.* So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 *not to the font.*

401. *home with me.* So the Qq; Ff *with me home.*

402. *do desire.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *desire.*

423. *not as a fee.* So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 *not as fee.*

434. *more depends on this than on the value.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *more than this depends upon the value,*—"a downright compositor's sophistication" (Furness).

435. *will I.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *I will.*

445. *And.* So all the old texts. Cambridge editors follow Capell's modernization, *an.*

446. *this.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *the,* which the Cambridge editors prefer.

451. *'gainst.* So Qq; F_1 *against,* which spoils the metre, *commandment* being pronounced as four syllables.

Scene II.

9. *His ring.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *this,* which some editors prefer.

ACT V.

Scene I.

4. *Troilus . . . Trojan.* All the old texts have *Troylus;* Q_1 has *Troyan;* Q_2 F_1 *Troian.* The Cambridge editors print *Troilus* and *Troyan,* but it seems better to be consistent and to use the modern forms of both the names.

6. *Cressid;* Q_2 F_1 *Cressed;* Q_1 *Cressada.*

11. *wild sea banks.* Most editions wrongly place a hyphen between *sea* and *banks.*

32. *wedlock.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *wedlockes.*

41–42. *Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo.* Most modern editions print *Master Lorenzo & Mistress Lorenzo,* on the authority of F_3. But, as the Cambridge editors have shown (Clarendon Press, p. 126), Launcelot is addressing Lorenzo only, since in l. 46 he says *tell him,* not *tell them.* The mistake is due to a curious process of corruption in the texts. Q_1 has *M. Lorenzo, M. Lorenzo;* Q_2 F_1 *M. Lorenzo & M. Lorenzo,* where the *&* may have been meant for an interrogation mark. In F_2 *&* was printed as *and* and followed by a misprint, *M. Lorenza.* In F_3 we have the full-blown error *M. Lorenzo & Mrs. Lorenza.*

49. *Sweet soul.* In Qq F_1 these words are improperly attributed to Launcelot. Rowe was the first to assign them to Lorenzo, substituting, however, the *love* of Ff_{2-4} for *soul.*

51. *Stephano.* So Q_1; Q_2 F_1 *Stephen.*

59. *patens.* There has been much discussion over this word. Q_1 has *pattents*, an obvious misprint; Q_2 F_1 *pattens;* Ff_{2-4} *patterns.* This last reading was followed by the early editors, and has been defended by Hunter and Collier on the ground that it is more natural for a floor to be inlaid with a pattern of golden stars than with the golden plates used in the administration of the Eucharist. On the other hand, the use of *pattern* in this sense of decorative design is unknown to Shakespeare, although occasionally his use of the word as in *H. V.*, II. iv. 61 approaches the modern meaning. Two quotations from Sylvester's popular translation of Du Bartas's *La Semaine* (entered in the Stationers' Registers 1591) possibly give the source whence Shakespeare drew this figure:

> Th' Almightie's finger fixed many a million
> Of golden Scutchions in that rich Pavillion.
> (Fourth Day of the First Week, ll. 308–9)

and

> That sumptuous canopy,
> The which th'unniggard hand of Majesty,
> Poudred so thick with Shields so shining cleer
> (Ibid., ll. 374–376.)

I can see no reason why the Cambridge editors should retain in their text the now obsolete spelling *patines*, first suggested by Malone for the Q_2 F_1 *pattens*. *Paten* is now universally recognized as the best spelling.

65. *it in.* So Q_2; Q_1 F_1 *in it.* Dr. Furness, taking *it* as referring to the soul, prefers the Q_1 F_1 reading, but the Q_2 text seems more metrical, since it throws the last stress of the line upon *in*, which is emphatic as being the separable part of the compound verb *close-in.*

75. *but hear perchance;* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *perchance but heare.* There is to my ear little to choose between the readings. The Cambridge editors, who usually follow Q_1, here print from Q_2, showing that they consider its reading decidedly preferable.

87. *Erebus.* So F_2. Qq_{1-2} have the curious misprint *Terebus*, which Qq_{3-4} corrupt still further into *Tenebris*. F_1 has *Erobus*.

109. *ho!* This is Malone's emendation for the *how* of all the old texts. It has been almost universally received. *How* was a common form of *Ho*, or *Hoa*, in Shakespeare's day.

114. *husbands' welfare.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *husband health*, probably a misprint for *husband's health*, which I take to be the phrase Shakespeare first wrote. The Cambridge and other editors who have accepted Pope's suggestion, *husbands' healths*, might have remembered that a poet with so fine an ear as Shakespeare would more likely, in Tennyson's phrase, "kick the geese out of a line" than multiply their hissing. I take *welfare* to be Shakespeare's own correction.

153. *your hour.* So the Qq; Ff *the hour*, which Dr. Furness rather prefers. Most editors follow the Qq.

157. *no, God's my judge.* So the Qq. F_1, probably on account of the statute against profanity on the stage, substituted *but well I know.* Rolfe alone among modern editors accepts this tame emendation.

159. *and.* So the old texts. Pope changed it to *an.* So in l. 176 below Theobald first printed *an* for *and.*

209. *my honor.* So the Qq; F_1 *mine honor.*

213. *displeased away;* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *away displeased.*

214. *had held up.* So Q_2 F_1; Q_1 *did uphold*, a reading which the Cambridge editors almost alone of nineteenth century editors adopt. The pluperfect tense of Q_2 F_1 seems better than the past of Q_1.

220. *For.* So the Qq; Ff *and*, which is much weaker.

249. *his wealth.* So the Qq; Ff *thy wealth.* All editors since Rowe follow the Qq.

250. *husband's.* Here as above in l. 114 Q_1 omits *'s.*

272. *even but.* So the Qq; Ff *but ev'n.* Most editors prefer the Qq reading.

Appendix A.

THE METRE.

It is hardly worth while for the young student of Shakespeare to attempt to enter deeply into the much discussed and still unsettled details of his metrical effects, much less into the question of the relation of these to the chronological order of his plays. At the same time, in order to enjoy to the full the poetry of such a play as the *Merchant of Venice*, one should be able to read it aloud; and to do this intelligently demands some knowledge, at least, of the general principles of Shakespearian metre. Fortunately for the young student the versification of the *Merchant of Venice* represents as nearly as possible the normal type of Shakespeare's usage, differing alike from the monotonous regularity of his earliest work, and the bold license of his later plays.

The *Merchant of Venice* is written in prose and verse. The prose amounts to nearly a quarter of the whole. It is used generally for light and humorous dialogue, such as that of Act I. scene ii. Launcelot Gobbo, the clown of the play, always speaks in prose, except once when he utters a rhymed couplet. The only passage in which strong emotion of any sort is expressed in prose is Act III. scene i. For a possible explanation of this see the introductory note to that scene (p. 126).

The verse of the play may be divided into two general classes: (a) blank verse, i. e. unrhymed lines in iambic pentameter; (b) rhymed lines in various metres.

(a) *Blank verse.* The typical blank verse line is an iambic

pentameter, that is, it contains five feet of two syllables each, the second of which is accented. Or, to use a modern terminology, it is "a sequence of five stressed and five unstressed syllables, commonly alternating." We may denote this line most simply by placing an accent (′) over the stressed syllable of each foot, as

The first′ of gold′ who this′ inscrip′tion bears′.

Now a prolonged succession of such lines would be extremely monotonous and trying to the ear, as may easily be seen by reading aloud the long speech of Ægeon in the first scene of the first act of the *Comedy of Errors*, one of the earliest of Shakespeare's plays. In order to avoid such monotony, Shakespeare soon began to make use of a number of variations from the normal line.

In the first place, he departed from the normal line by adding a syllable,

(*a*) to the end of the line. This is the so-called feminine ending, as

I would′ have stayed′ till I′ had made′ you mer′ry.

Occasionally he added two syllables. If the second of these is a stressed syllable we have a line of six feet, sometimes called an Alexandrine, as

I will′ assume′ desert′. Give′ me a key′ for this′.

Otherwise we have the so-called double feminine ending, as

But who′ comes here′? Loren′zo and′ his in′fidel.

The line of six feet may itself have a feminine ending, in which case the line will contain thirteen syllables, as

Because′ you are′ not sad′. Now, by′ two-hea′ded Jan′us.

(*b*) to the foot preceding the cæsura, i. e. the pause in the line, as

Fad′ing in mu′sic: that′ the compar′ison′.

Sometimes two syllables are added here, both of which are so lightly pronounced that they cannot be reckoned as making a foot, as

O love′, be mo′derate; allay′ thy ec′stasy′.

In the second place, Shakespeare occasionally used lines of less than ten syllables. Thus we have lines of nine syllables, as

But she′ may learn′; hap′pier′ than this′.

and fragmentary lines of four feet, as

Why then′ you are′ in love′. Fie, fie′.

of three feet, as

What sum′ owes he′ the Jew′?

of two feet, as

And for′ three months′.

and even of one foot, as

La′stly

Of these fragmentary lines it may be remarked that lines of three and of two feet are not uncommon, some thirty-six of them appearing in the play. Lines of one foot are much less common, and lines of four feet rarest of all.

Another method of varying the normal line employed by Shakespeare is the substitution of some other foot for the iamb in one or more places in the line. The commonest substitution is that of a trochee, i. e. a foot of two syllables with the accent on the first. This substitution is sometimes called stress-inversion. It may occur in any foot of the line, as in the first,

Em′pties itself′ as doth′ an in′land brook′.

in the second,

Live thou′, I′ live; with much′ much more′ dismay′.

in the third,

And by′ the near′ guess′ of my me′mory!

in the fourth,

Would make′ me sad′. My wind′ coo′ling my broth′

and in the last,

And laugh′ like pa′rrots at′ a bag′pi′per.

Occasionally, though not often, we find two trochees in a single line.

Sometimes instead of the substitution of a trochee we find two light syllables instead of one in the first half of the foot, thus producing the effect of an anapæst, i. e. a foot of three syllables with the accent on the last, as

The pro′digal Chris′tian. Jes′sica′, my girl′

This substitution, however, is rare in the *Merchant of Venice*.

Many apparent irregularities in the metre of the blank verse are due to a difference of pronunciation between Shakespeare's time and ours. Some of the more striking of these are indicated in the notes. Due attention must also be paid to the frequent contractions of two words, or two syllables, into one; and to the expansion of one syllable into two when required by the metre. The same word is sometimes pronounced differently in different places, even in the same line, as

And so′, though yo′urs, n′ot yours, prove′ it so′.

In general, it should always be remembered that Shakespeare wrote his verse to be spoken, not read. Many lines that puzzle the ingenuity of critics attempting to fit them into a hard and fast metrical scheme, flow along smoothly enough when spoken in rapid dialogue, and aided by the intonation and the gestures of the actor.

(b) The percentage of rhymed lines in the *Merchant of Venice* is only about 5% of the verse lines. The majority of rhymed lines are in the so-called heroic couplet, i. e. in iambic pentameter, each pair of lines rhyming, as

Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.

We have one instance of a quatrain with alternate rhymes at the close of Act III. scene ii. Such quatrains are not uncommon in Shakespeare's early work, but they gradually disappear from his later plays.

Other instances of rhyme in this play are found in the scrolls within the caskets, which are in trochaic tetrameter, i. e. four-foot lines, each foot consisting of a trochee, as

All′ that glis′ters is′ not gold′.

It will be noted that the last syllable of the last foot is omitted here. This is the case throughout these passages and is done for the sake of combining the rhyme and the stressed syllable. An occasional iambic line also appears in these scrolls, as

Your an′swer had′ not been′ inscroll′d′.

The speech of Arragon after his unsuccessful choice and two lines of Morocco's farewell, are also in trochaic tetrameter. The song in Act III. scene ii. presents a mixture of iambic and trochaic four-foot lines.

Lastly we have a pair of instances of rhymed doggerel (I. i. 111–112 and I. ii. 146–147) which cannot be reduced to any regular metre.

Appendix B.

THE SOURCES.

In order to show the close connection between the *Merchant of Venice* and *Il Pecorone*, not only in general outline but often in minute details, an abstract of the story as epitomized by Dr Johnson is here given. A literal translation of the whole may be found in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, v. ii, p. 65. I have purposely condensed as much as possible of those parts of the story which were neglected by Shakespeare, and told at greater length those parts which he incorporated into the play.

A rich merchant of Florence left all his property to his two elder sons, and sent the youngest, Giannetto, with a letter of recommendation to his god-father, Ansaldo, the richest Christian merchant in Venice. Ansaldo adopted the youth and treated him as his own son. On Giannetto's expressing a desire to make a voyage to Alexandria, Ansaldo fitted out a splendid galley for him and put him in command of it. On the voyage, Giannetto saw a fine harbor, called Belmonte, and asked to whom it belonged. The captain of the ship told him that it belonged to a beautiful widow who had been the ruin of many gentlemen. She had made a law that whoever entered the harbor must woo her: if he won her he would become lord of the country, but if not, he must forfeit all that he brought with him. Giannetto was seized with a desire to try his fortune, and sailed into the harbor.

He was well received by the lady, who asked him if he knew the custom of the country. On his replying that he did and had come to court her, she invited him to her chamber; but before he entered she gave him a draught of wine drugged with a sleeping potion. In consequence of this he at once fell asleep and never woke until late next morning, by which time the lady had seized his ship. She gave him a horse and a little money, and he rode back to Venice very disconsolate.

Ansaldo, however, received him kindly and next year fitted out a second ship even richer than the first, with which Giannetto once more sailed to Belmonte. Once more he was tricked with the drugged wine, lost his ship, and returned in disgrace to Venice.

As Ansaldo saw that Giannetto would never be happy until he won the lady, he began to raise money to fit out a third ship. To complete its equipment, however, he needed ten thousand ducats more than he had in store. These he borrowed of a Jew at Mestri,* on condition that if they were not repaid on the feast of St. John in the next month of June, the Jew might cut a pound of flesh from any part of his body. Ansaldo begged Giannetto that if any misfortune happened he would return to Venice in order that his foster-father might see him before he died; in this case he would die happy.

Giannetto sailed to Belmonte for the third time; and on this occasion the secret of the drugged cup was revealed to him by a sympathetic serving-maid of the lady. Accordingly he made a mere pretence of drinking, won the lady, was married to her with great ceremony, and lived with her very happily, forgetting all about Ansaldo and the bond to the Jew. Suddenly one day the sight of a religious procession reminded him that it was St. John's day, and that the bond had accordingly fallen due. Confessing the state of things to his wife he received from her a hundred thousand ducats and rode at once to Venice to rescue his foster-father, if possible, and bring him back to Belmonte.

When Giannetto reached Venice, he found that the Jew had already arrested Ansaldo, and although he was willing to spare him until Giannetto arrived, he insisted on claiming the pound of flesh. Several merchants wished to pay the debt; but the Jew would not listen to them, saying that he wished to have the satisfaction of killing the greatest of the Christian merchants. Giannetto offered the Jew the amount due him and as much more as he pleased to ask, but the Jew said he would take nothing but the pound of flesh, because the debt had not been paid at the proper time. Since the Jew's claim was based upon the laws of Venice and justice was strictly administered in that city, Giannetto had no resource but entreaties. At last he offered the Jew one hundred thousand ducats, but he replied that if Giannetto would give him as much gold as Venice was worth he would not accept it.

In the meantime the lady had disguised herself as a young

* Mestri, or Mestre, is a little town on the mainland a few miles from Venice.

lawyer and had come to Venice. On her arrival she caused a proclamation to be made that a famous lawyer from Bologna* had come to Venice to settle all disputed cases. Giannetto proposed to the Jew to refer the matter to this lawyer, and the Jew agreed, but insisted that he would hold to his bond. When they came into the court, the lawyer, who acted as judge, read the bond and said to the Jew: "You must take the hundred thousand ducats and release the merchant, who will always thank you for the favor." The Jew replied that he would do nothing of the sort. Then the judge told the Jew to cut off a pound of Ansaldo's flesh. But when the Jew approached the merchant with a razor in his hand, the judge said to him: "Be careful to take neither more nor less than a pound, for if you do I will have your head cut off; and beside, if you shed one drop of blood, you shall be put to death. The bond makes no mention of the shedding of blood, but says expressly that you may take a pound of flesh, neither more nor less." After a long debate, the Jew said he would take the hundred thousand ducats, but the judge told him to cut off the pound of flesh according to the bond. Then the Jew offered to take ninety thousand, or even eighty thousand ducats. Giannetto wanted to pay him, but the judge told him to be quiet and let him manage the case. At last the Jew said: "Give me my own ten thousand ducats"; but the judge replied: "You shall have nothing; either take the pound of flesh or I will have the bond cancelled." In a great rage the Jew tore the bond to pieces and Ansaldo was set free.

After the trial Giannetto carried the hundred thousand ducats to the inn where the lawyer was staying. He, however, refused to receive them, but asked Giannetto to give him a ring which he wore. "Willingly," said Giannetto; "but as it is a ring given me by my lady to wear for her sake, I am reluctant to part with it, since she will believe that I have given it to a woman." At last, however, he gave the ring to the lawyer, who straightway departed and hurried back to Belmonte, arriving there some days before Giannetto and Ansaldo.

When Giannetto and his foster-father reached Belmonte, the lady welcomed Ansaldo very warmly, but pretended to be angry with her husband. On his asking the cause, she demanded what had become of the ring she had given him. "I swear by all that is sacred, and by your dear self, that I gave it to the lawyer who gained our cause," replied Giannetto. "And

* Bologna, one of the oldest of Italian universities, was famous for its law-school.

I can swear," said the lady, "that you gave it to a woman. You should have stayed in Venice with your mistresses, for I fear they all wept when you departed." Giannetto was so troubled by this speech that he began to weep and assured the lady that it was not so. But she burst out laughing and ran to embrace him, showing him the ring and telling him of her disguise as the lawyer. This caused Giannetto to love her more than ever. He married Ansaldo to the damsel who had warned him of the drugged cup, and they all lived happily together all the rest of their lives.

It is plain from what has been said in the Introduction that this novel was the first source of the *Merchant of Venice*. The alterations and additions that Shakespeare made were mainly for the sake of character portrayal and of dramatic effect. Of these latter alterations the most important is the substitution of the test by the caskets for the cup of drugged wine, an incident which, by its very nature, was incapable of being presented on the stage. Unless Shakespeare found the Casket Story united with the Bond Story in a previous play, he got it from a selection of stories made from the *Gesta Romanorum* by the old printer, Wynkyn de Worde, in the first part of the sixteenth century, and republished by Richard Robinson six times between 1577 and 1601. The frequent publication of Robinson's book testifies to the popularity of the collection in Shakespeare's lifetime, and there can be little doubt that he was acquainted with it. A brief abstract of the story of the Three Caskets as it appears in this collection is here given. The whole is reprinted in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, v. ii. p. 102 *seq.*

The king of Ampluy sent his daughter by sea to marry the son of the emperor of Rome. On the way she was shipwrecked and swallowed by a whale. Nevertheless she finally arrived at Rome, where the emperor resolved to try whether she was worthy to marry his son. Accordingly he commanded to bring forth three vessels. The first was made of pure gold beset with precious stones without, and within full of dead men's bones, with this inscription: "Whoso chooseth me shall find that he deserveth." The second was made of fine silver, filled with earth and worms, with this inscription: "Whoso

chooseth me shall find that his nature desireth." The third was made of lead, full within of precious stones, with the inscription: "Whoso chooseth me shall find that God hath disposed to him."

The emperor told the king's daughter that if she chose a vessel wherein was profit to her and to other, she should have his son, but otherwise not. Thereupon she prayed to God to give her grace to choose aright, and looked upon the vessels. When she read the inscription of the gold vessel, she said that she did not know what was within and so she would not choose it. Likewise she rejected the silver vessel, saying that she knew her nature desired what was evil. But when she read the inscription on the third vessel she said: "God never disposes any harm and therefore I will choose this." So she obtained the emperor's son and lived happily with him many years.

It has not seemed worth while to trace these stories of the Bond and the Caskets to their remote origin. Those who are interested in such matters will find this done in the Appendix to Dr. Furness's Variorum edition of the *Merchant of Venice*. There is no reason to believe that Shakespeare ever saw any earlier forms of the stories than those found in *Il Pecorone* and in Robinson's *Gesta Romanorum*.

Much has been said as to the relation of the *Merchant of Venice* to the ballad of *Gernutus* printed in Percy's *Reliques* and included by Dr. Furness in the Appendix to the Variorum *Merchant of Venice*. But nothing whatever is known of the date of this ballad. It has, indeed, been argued from its omission of all reference to Portia that it must precede the play, but another ballad,* printed as late as 1664 and evidently founded on the *Merchant of Venice*, also omits all reference to Portia as the judge and actually substitutes Jessica for her in the trial scene. If *Gernutus* was written before the *Merchant of Venice* it is just possible that it may preserve for us the story of the lost play mentioned by Gosson. In this case, it is plain that nothing like the casket story appeared in that play. But all arguments based upon this undated ballad are hypothetical to a degree.

* Also printed in the Appendix to the Variorum *Merchant of Venice*.

Appendix C.

THE DATE.

It is customary in preparing an edition of a play of Shakespeare for use in schools and colleges to begin the introduction with a discussion of the date of composition. It seems to me, however, that the young student of Shakespeare has little to gain from such a discussion. When he is once acquainted with the circumstances which gave rise to the composition of the play, he had better proceed at once to the study of the play itself than spend time in examining the proofs and counter-proofs by means of which various critics have sought to establish the exact date of the first appearance of the play. Especially is this the case with the *Merchant of Venice*, where we have no positive proof of any sort to determine this date. In order, however, that the student may not be ignorant of what has been said on the subject, the few facts that are known in regard to the date of this play are here briefly summarized.

From what has been said in the Introduction it is plain that the play cannot have been written before the trial of Dr. Lopez in the winter of 1594. It is first mentioned by Meres in his enumeration of Shakespeare's plays in *Palladis Tamia*, a book containing an account of contemporary English literature which appeared in 1598. Somewhere between these two dates the composition of the play must have occurred. The metrical tests, which are so often invoked to fix the date of a play, do not in this case give us any exact answer. According to the latest and most careful experimenter with these

tests,* all that we can be sure of is that the *Merchant* was written after *Richard II.* and before *Henry V.*, that is, between 1593 or 1594 and 1599.

Malone, one of the most learned and diligent of the eighteenth-century commentators on Shakespeare, identified the *Merchant of Venice* with a play called by Henslowe the *Venesyon* (Venetian) *Comedy*, which was first produced at Newington Butts, a theatre on the south side of the Thames, on August 25, 1594. Sidney Lee, one of the best authorities of to-day, is of the same opinion.† This opinion, however, is rejected by most commentators on the ground that it would have been impossible for Shakespeare to have conceived and written such a masterpiece of dramatic art in the brief interval between the execution of Lopez, June 9, 1594, and the first performance of the *Venesyon Comedy*. Mr. Lee seeks to escape this objection by asserting that the *Venesyon Comedy* was the earliest version of the *Merchant*, probably a hasty sketch, and that the play, as we have it, owes its perfection to subsequent revision. There are, however, no proofs of such a revision. The few important differences between the first and second quartos which have been pointed out in the Textual Notes indicate at most a verbal revision of several passages; and the trifling inconsistencies in the play itself may be due either to the haste in which it was written, or to the retention of a few fragments of the old play on which it appears to have been based. It may be noted, however, in support of Malone's identification that Shakespeare need by no means have waited till the death of Lopez to begin the composition of his play. The Jew was, as we know, condemned to death on the last day of February. The *Jew of Malta* had already been revived on February 4th, perhaps in consequence of the excitement caused by the arrest of Lopez. Shakespeare may very well have begun his work on the *Merchant of Venice* in the early spring of 1594, and this would allow him to finish it in plenty of time for a performance on August 25th.

* König, *Der Vers in Shakspere's Dramen*, 1888, p. 136.

† Lee *Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 69.

We know from Henslowe's diary that the *Venesyon Comedy* was a very popular play in the autumn and early winter of 1594–95. It was performed eight times before Christmas and, as the figures in Henslowe's accounts show, to very good houses. Curiously enough the *Jew of Malta* suffered at the same time a notable diminution of popularity. Although it had been given two or three times a month, and always to good houses, during the summer of 1594, after the appearance of the *Venesyon Comedy* it was only played three times before it was dropped altogether, and laid away for over a year. The last of these performances was to so scanty an audience that Henslowe got only three shillings as his share of the receipts. That there is any causal connection between the popularity of the *Venesyon Comedy* and the diminishing attractiveness of the *Jew of Malta* we cannot positively assert. One would be glad to believe that Shakespeare's true picture of a Jew drove Marlowe's grotesque caricature from the stage; but it would be uncritical to assert so much upon the basis of the figures of Henslowe's diary.

In conclusion, then, we can only say that the *Merchant* appeared some time between 1594 and 1598. Of the many critics who have discussed the matter Malone, Staunton, Grant White, Delius, Rolfe, and Lee prefer 1594 as the probable date of composition; Dowden, Verity, Fleay, and Gollancz prefer 1596; Herford says about 1596–7; Furnivall about 1596; no modern critic puts it later than 1597. After all the precise date matters little so long as we know that this great masterpiece was conceived at a time when Shakespeare felt his powers as a dramatist, unhindered by the checks that had formerly been laid upon them, rising to the height of their great opportunities and surpassing even the genius of the great poet and dramatist who had hitherto been his master.

Appendix D.

HINTS FOR STUDY.

As an ideal toward which the student may strive, although one hardly to be obtained by the cursory reading which is usually given to books set for reading only in our college entrance examinations, I print here Professor Meiklejohn's plan of study for 'perfect possession' of the play, as given in his edition of the *Merchant of Venice*, p. 122: "To attain the standard of 'Perfect Possession' the student ought to have an intimate and ready knowledge of the following parts of the subject:

1. The Plot and Story of the Play.
    (*a*) The general plot.
    (*b*) The special incidents.
2. The Characters; ability to give a connected account of all that is done and most of what is said by each character in the play.
3. The Influence and Interplay of the characters upon each other.
    (*a*) Relation of A to B and of B to A.
    (*b*) Relation of A to C and D.
4. Complete Possession of the Language.
    (*a*) Meanings of words.
    (*b*) Use of old words, or of words in an old meaning.
    (*c*) grammar.
    (*d*) ability to quote lines to illustrate a grammatical point.
5. Power to Reproduce or Quote.
    (*a*) What was said by A or B on a particular occasion.
    (*b*) What was said by A in reply to B.

(*c*) What argument was used by C at a particular juncture.

(*d*) To quote a line in instance of an idiom or a peculiar meaning.

6. Power to Locate.

(*a*) To attribute a line or statement to a certain person on a certain occasion.

(*b*) To cap a line.

(*c*) To fill in the right word or epithet.

The following questions and topics for short compositions have been taken from papers recently set for entrance into some of the leading American universities.

QUESTIONS.

1. What elements of greatness do you discover in Shylock's character? (Give the reasons for your opinion.)
2. What character do you admire most in the *Merchant of Venice?* (Give the reasons for your opinion.)
3. Has Shylock or Antonio the greater claim upon your sympathy? (Give the reasons for your opinion.)
4. Under what circumstances is the 'Music of the Spheres' mentioned? What is said of it?
5. Give the substance of Bassanio's speech at the caskets.
6. What was Shylock's motive in demanding a pound of flesh when he might have had payment of his bond in money?
7. Tell the circumstances of Jessica's escape from the house of Shylock.
8. Quote ten consecutive lines from the play.
9. Give your opinion of the treatment received by Shylock throughout the play.
10. What relation do the minor love stories in the *Merchant of Venice* bear to the main plot?
11. How does the use of contrast in the characters and setting add to the interest of the play?

TOPICS.

1. The conditions upon which Portia's hand was to be obtained in marriage.
2. The sentence pronounced by Portia upon Shylock.
3. The trial scene.
4. The true character of Shylock.
5. Bassanio and the caskets.
6. Antonio's debt to Shylock.
7. The story of the rings.
8. The meeting between Launcelot Gobbo and his father.
9. The story of the play.
10. Jessica.
11. A criticism of any professional performance of the *Merchant of Venice* that you have seen.
12. Discuss Shylock's position as one of a persecuted race and as a money lender, and show its effect upon his character.
13. The fifth act of the *Merchant of Venice*.

Glossary.

Abode, II. vi. 21, delay.
advised, I. i. 142, careful; *advisedly*, V. 253, deliberately.
affection, IV. i. 50, sympathy; *affections*, I. i. 16, feelings, emotions.
appropriation, I. ii. 46, addition.
argosies, I. i. 9, large trading vessels. The word is derived from Ragusa, a town on the Adriatic, famous in Shakespeare's time for its wide-spread commerce and large ships. The first form in which this word appears in English, *ragusye*, shows the derivation more clearly.
attended, V. 103, noticed, regarded with attention.

Balance, IV. i. 255, scales.
ban'd, IV. i. 46, poisoned.
bated, III. iv. 32, reduced, weakened.
beholding, I. iii. 106, indebted.
beshrew, II. vi. 52, curse, often used jestingly.
bonnet, I. ii. 81, hat.

Cerecloth, II. vii. 51, a cloth dipped in melted wax (Latin *cera*, 'wax') and used as a shroud.
civility, II. ii. 204, good-breeding, decorum.
close, II. vi. 47, dark, secret.
commends, II. ix. 90, compliments.
commodity, III. iii. 27, convenience.
complexion, III. i. 32, natural disposition.
compromised, III. iii. 79, agreed.
conceit, I. i. 92, intellect, understanding, III. iv. 2, conception, idea.

condition, I. ii. 143., temper, character.
confound, III. ii. 278, destroy.
continent, III. ii. 131, inventory, abstract.
contrive, IV. i. 352, plot.
convenient, III. iv. 56, proper to the occasion.
conveniently, II. viii. 45, properly.
counterfeit, III. ii. 115, portrait.
cope, IV i. 412, meet, match with an equivalent.
costly, II ix. 94, richly-adorned, gorgeous.
cozen, II. ix. 38, cheat.
cureless, IV. i. 142, incurable.

Disabling, II. vii. 30, disparagement.
doit, I. iii. 141, the smallest coin which received a current stamp in the Middle Ages, worth about a quarter of a cent.
ducat, I. iii. 1, a Venetian coin either of gold or silver, the first worth about $2.25, the second about $1. The word is derived from Low Latin *ducatus*, a duchy, and means a coin struck by a duke.

Eaning, I. iii. 88, bearing, used only of sheep.
eanlings, I. iii. 80, new-born lambs.
equal, I. iii. 150, exact.
estate, III. ii. 239, state, condition; *estates*, II. ix. 41, dignities.
estimation, II. vii. 26, value, worth.
excrement, III. ii. 87, outgrowth, here used for 'beard.'

Faint, I. i. 125, small, narrow.
fall, I. iii. 89, let fall, give birth to.
feared, II. i. 9, frightened.
fearful, I. iii. 176, untrustworthy, giving cause for fear.
fill-horse, II. ii. 100, shaft-horse.
fond, II. ix. 27, foolish.
forfeitures, III. iii. 22, penalties due to any one.
fretten, IV. i. 77, shaken.

Gaberdine, I. iii. 113, a long loose cloak.
garnish, II. vi. 45, dress.
gramercy, II. ii. 128, many thanks, a corruption of the French *grand merci*.
gratify, IV. i. 406, "make a present, usually of money; give a gratuity especially as a reward" (New English Dictionary).
guarded, II. ii. 164, faced, trimmed.
guiled, III. ii. 97, full of guile, treacherous.

Humility, III. i. 72, humanity, benevolence.
humour, IV. i. 43, fancy, whim.
husbandry, III. iv. 25, care, charge.

Imposition, III. iv. 33, imposed task, injunction; I. ii. 114, binding arrangement.
intergatories, V. 298, questions asked upon oath.
intermission, III. ii. 201, delay.
insculp'd, II. vii. 67, carved.

Jump, II. ix. 32, agree.

Knapped, II. i. 10, nibbled.

Level, I. ii. 41, guess.
liberal, II. ii. 194, free and easy.
likely, II. ix. 92, pleasing, good-looking.
livings, III. ii. 158, estates, possessions.

Magnificoes, III. ii. 282, Venetian noblemen.
marry, II. ii. 69, by the Virgin Mary; in Shakespeare's day the phrase was merely a mild expletive.
mere, III. ii. 265, absolute, unqualified.
misconster'd, II. ii. 197, misunderstood.
moe, I. i. 108, more, a very common form in Shakespeare, used to denote number, not quantity.

Naughty, III. iii. 9, good-for-nothing, wicked.
nice, II. i. 14, fastidious.

O'erlook'd, III. ii. 115, bewitched.
opinion, I. i. 91, reputation.

Pageants, I. i. 11, shows, theatrical exhibitions. The word originally meant the movable scaffold upon which the old miracle plays were performed.
parts, IV. i. 92, tasks.
patch, II. v. 46, fool. The word was often applied to the professional fool or jester in allusion to his parti-colored clothes.
patens, V. i. 59, small, flat plates used in the celebration of the mass.
pawn'd, III. v. 87, staked.
peize, III. ii. 22, literally weigh, then retard by hanging weights on.
pent-house, II. vi. 1, part of a house projecting over a street.
persuaded, III. ii. 283, argued.
pill'd, I. iii. 85, stripped, peeled.
port, I. i. 124, state; III. ii. 283, rank.
posy, V. 148, a motto inscribed on the inner side of a ring.
preferr'd, II. iii. 185, promoted.
presence, III. ii. 54, personal appearance, bearing.
presently, I. i. 183, at once.
prest, I. i. 160, ready, from the old French *prest* = *prêt*.
prevented, I. i. 61, anticipated.
proper, I. ii. 77, handsome.
pursue, IV. i. 295, pronounce.

Quaintly, II. iv. 6, gracefully, prettily.
qualify, IV. i. 7, moderate.
quality, III. ii. 6, manner.
question, IV. i. 20, argue; IV. i. 346, talk.

Reason'd, II. viii. 27, talked, from the French *raisonner*.
reasoning, I. ii. 23, conversation.
regreets, II. ix. 39, greetings.
remorse, IV. i. 20, pity.
respect, I. i. 74, consideration, attention.
respective, V. 156, considerative.
rheum, I. iii. 118, saliva.
rib, II. vii. 51, enclose, as the ribs do the heart.
road, V. 288, harbor.

Scanted, II. i. 17, restricted.
scarfed, II. vi. 15, adorned with flags.
seasons, IV. i. 197, tempers, softens.
sensible, II. viii. 48, sensitive; II. ix. 89, substantial.
sentences, I. ii. 11, maxims, moral sayings.
shrew, V. 21, a vixen, a scold.
shrewd, III. ii. 46, bad, evil.
shrive, I. ii. 144, hear at confession and absolve.
signior, I. i. 10, an Italian title of respect, equivalent to 'sir' and, like 'sir,' derived from the Latin *senior*.
slubber, II. viii. 39, slur over.
sonties, II. ii. 47, probably a corruption of 'saunties,' a diminutive of 'saints.'
sort, V. 132, ordain, dispose.
squandered, I. iii. 22, scattered.
strange, I. i. 67, reserved, distant.
strond, I. i. 171, strand.
suited, I. ii. 79, dressed; III. v. 20, adapted.

Thrift, I. iii. 51, profit.

Unfurnished, III. ii. 126, unmatched, unprovided with its fellow.
unhandled, V. 72, unbroken.
unthrift, V. 16, good-for-nothing.
unthrifty, I. iii. 177, worthless.
usance, I. iii. 46, usury, interest.

Vailing, I. i. 28, lowering.
vantage, III. ii. 176, opportunity.
via, II. ii. 11, an Italian word used in England in Shakespeare's day as an exclamation to encourage horses.
void, I. iii. 118, empty, spit out.

Waft, V. 11, beckoned.
waste, III. iv. 12, spend.
wealth, V. 249, welfare.
wit, II. i. 18, wisdom.
wroath, II. ix. 78, sorrow, misfortune.

Younker, II. vi. 14, youth, young fellow.

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